

HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE PLACE NAMES AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS OF TEHSIL PULWAMA

Dissertation

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By

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UNDER THE SUPERVISION OF

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the M. Phil Dissertation entitled “**Historical Importance of the Place Names and Archaeological Remains of Tehsil Pulwama**” is the original and bonafide research work carried out by **Nisar Ahmad Dar**, Research Scholar of the Post-Graduate Department of History, University of Kashmir, Srinagar, under my supervision. No part of this dissertation has been submitted for any degree before.

It is further certified that the scholar has put in the required attendance in the Department and fulfills all the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy.

I, therefore, recommend this dissertation for the award of Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) degree in History.

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ABBREVIATIONS

A.R.	Annual Administration report of Jammu and Kashmir State (General).
Adm. Rep.	Administrative Reports of Jammu and Kashmir State, available in Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Repository, Jammu.
A.S.R.	Archaeological Survey of Indian Reports.
Ass. Rep.	Land Assessment Report, available in Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Repository, Jammu.
Aug.	August
Census	Census of India, Kashmir Part.
Dec.	December
Deptt.	Department
etc.,	Etcetra, and others
Extl.	External
Feb.	February
For.	Foreign.
For. And Pol. Deptt.	(i) Government of India Records, Foreign and Political Department Proceedings from 1914-31, available in the National Archives of India, New Delhi. (ii) Government of Jammu and Kashmir (Chief Secretariat), Foreign and Political Department Records from 1922-47, available in Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Repository, at Jammu and Srinagar.
For. Deptt.	Government of India records, Foreign Department Proceedings from 1846-

	1913, available in the National Archives of India, New Delhi.
Front.	Frontier
Gazetteer	A Gazetteer of Kashmir and the Adjoining Districts of Kashtawar, Jammu, Poonch and the Valley of Kishen Ganga.
Gen.	General
Gen. Deptt.	Government of Jammu and Kashmir (Chief Secretariat), General Department Persian Records from 1846-92, available in Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Repository, at Jammu and Srinagar.
Govt.	Government
Hand Book	A Hand Book of Jammu and Kashmir State, 1924.
i.e.,	That is
I.G.I.	Imperial Gazetteer of India (Year as mentioned).
Ibid.	Ibidem, in the same place.
Intel.	Internal
J&K	The Jammu and Kashmir
J.A.S.B.	Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.
JKA	Government of Jammu and Kashmir Records, available in Jammu and Kashmir State Archives, Repository, at Jammu and Srinagar.
Man.	Manwatta
Memo.	Memorandum
MUF	Muslim United Front
NAI	National Archives of India

No.	Number
Nos.	Numbers
Op.cit.	Opera, citate in the work cited.
p.	Page Number
Pol.	Political
pp.	Page Numbers
pvt.	Private
Rajat.	Rajatarangini of Kalhana, translated by Sir Aurel Stein.
Rep.	Reprint
S.	Samvat Year
S.no	Serial no
Sept.	September
S.D.P.	State Domestic Product
Tr.	Translation
U.S.	United States
Viz.,	Videlicat, namely

Preface

Present work took its shape as a result of the shift in historiography where the global approach to history calls for total history of mankind which should be understood from the stand point of local and precisely micro-history. In such reconstruction the non-conventional sources which include folklore, oral tradition, psycho-social traits of commoners, languages and popular culture. However, the methodology of working with non-conventional sources is rather more demanding and distinguishing. It is important, therefore, to undertake field survey, interview with people and work in the manner of participatory researcher besides taking full advantage of the conventional sources particularly archaeology which is supposed to be unbiased and authentic. Keeping in view the importance of this novel approach, the researcher identified topic and chose to work on Pulwama tehsil which has abundance of villages having diverse nomenclature and is rich in oral tradition besides having ethnic, religious and cultural diversity. The area under study has a myriad of archaeological remnants that make it historically rich, promising to inquiry and fruitful to evaluation. The work in hand attempts to throw fresh light on the history of different phases of socio-economic and religious history of Kashmir through the micro-study. It is in fact a maiden attempt to take out history from the cozy chambers of academia to the domain of popular culture wherein live life and blood characters can be seen shaping the history and cultural artifacts speaking for themselves. It is hoped that the study shall encourage similar progressive ventures wherein undocumented dimensions of our past can be brought forth. I sincerely hope that the work will have a favourable reception in academic and non-academic spheres of the society.

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I owe a deep depth of gratitude to the library staff of **Allama Iqbal Library**, University of Kashmir. I wish to record my gratitude for the help I received from **Sameena Jee** Librarian Department Library and **Shugafra Jee**, librarian State Archives Srinagar.

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I am highly thankful to my cousins, **Dr. Rukhsar, Mr. Parveez, Mr. Hilal, Mr. Javeed, Mr. Irshad,** and my sisters **Muneera Akthar** and **Mahmooda Akthar,** who always encourage me and pray for my betterment. I am highly thankful to my brother in laws **Mr. Ayoub Javeed,** and **Mr. Imtiyaz Ahmad,** who provided the bond of friendship and assistance throughout my research.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

“Like the strata of a geologic fossil record”, says Richard Eaton, “Place names covering the surface of a map silently testify to past historical processes”.

– Richard M. Eaton¹

The invention of nomenclature is among the greatest achievements of the human species and the practice of giving names to places is as old as the story of man itself. One is, therefore, driven by a natural inquisitiveness to probe into how and why particular place names have evolved. They unravel for us tremendous human activity on different planes. A place name can carry in its pack centuries of history, it can tell us what the landscape was like a millennium ago and it can reveal features of a language long disappeared.

With names have sprung up folklore, tradition, mythology, learning, history and social behavior not as sophisticated as ours, but native and without any complexity. Place names are jam-packed with material of human interest in the manner a bee-hive stores honey. The place names are the reservoirs, which contain a great wealth of information on our past. Where there is no written record of past civilization or the day-to-day events of ordinary people, much remains to be unlocked from information contained in the names of villages, town lands, streets, rivers, fields and monuments. Warren Upham, a top toponymist has rightly remarked that *“we use place names every day, thinking about where we are going, not where the names came from”*². It is noteworthy to mention here that the scientific study of place names (toponyms), their origins, meanings, use and typology is called toponymy³. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word "toponymy" first appeared in English in 1876; since then, toponymy has come to replace "place-name" in professional discourse among toponymists. It can be argued that the first toponymists were the storytellers and poets who explained the origin of certain place names as part of their tales; sometimes place-names served as the basis for the etiological

legends. The process of folk etymology usually took over, whereby a false meaning was extracted from a name based on its structure or sounds.

Place names provide the most useful geographical reference system in the world. Consistency and accuracy are essential in referring to a place to prevent confusion in everyday business and recreation. A toponymist, through well-established local principles and procedures developed in cooperation and consultation with the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN), applies the science of toponymy to establish officially recognized geographical names. A toponymist relies not only on maps and local histories, but interviews with local residents to determine names with established local usage. The exact application of a toponymy, its specific language, its pronunciation, and its origins and meaning are all important facts to be recorded during name surveys.

Scholars have found that toponymy provides valuable insight into the historical geography of a particular region. In 1954 F. M. Powicke said of place name study that it *"uses, enriches and tests the discoveries of archaeology and history and the rules of the philologists"*⁴. Toponymy not only illustrates ethnic settlement patterns, but they can also help to identify discrete periods of immigration⁵.

Toponymists are responsible for the active preservation of their region's culture through toponymy. They typically ensure the ongoing development of geographical names data base and associated publications, for recording and disseminating authoritative hard-copy and digital toponymic data. This data may be disseminated in a wide variety of formats, including digital (Geographical Information Systems & Google Map formats) and hard-copy topographic maps.

The study of place names plays an important role in linguistic, archaeological and historical research and has a distinguished past. As an interdisciplinary study, place names research takes into account historical, folkloristic, linguistic, geographical and ethnological data. Place names thus reflect not only physical characteristics of the place, but also characteristics of the people who lived there. They may provide insights into cultures, linguistics,

histories, habitats, and spatial and environmental perceptions. Place names are sometimes the sole remainders of long-lost languages, the only vestiges of past inhabitants. They often long outlive the people who gave the place the name, and so the original significance of the name may be lost.

Place names are the repositories of great volumes of information on our past. Place names not only serve as geographical markers but as cultural and historical markers, as well. Place names give us value and a sense of shared community and memory. When asked why place names are so important, Lewis L. McArthur answered “*that without names you have nothing; you cannot conduct...*”⁶ In the vast majority of cases they do not refer to cataclysmic events or important political personalities. They were named by ordinary hardworking people to record the day to day events or work practices which were the backbone of our society through many millennia. Place names give us a huge insight into our social history, a history which, for the most part, was not considered sufficiently important to be recorded by professional historians. They are never influenced by revisionism or propaganda as official histories often are. For this reason, they are of the greatest significance, value and integrity.

The study of place names, in the recent past, has assumed considerable significance in the domain of historical literature⁷. Besides, identifying the contours of local or regional history, place names help historian in understanding the people’s response towards the public constructive measures and development activities undertaken at a particular period of historical evolution. The place names not only assist researcher in drawing the physical boundaries but they offer penetrating insights into the civic and social profile of the area too. For socio-economic mapping no other evidence can prove more fruitful than the study of place names and this kind of evidence exclusively belongs to the domain of oral tradition. Any study of past is both fascinating and fruitful; fruitful to understand the workings of human to built their material and non-material world including the institutions which in return shaped their attitudes and responses. While the traditional histories narrate the past in relation to the courts and rulers of the time, the non-traditional sources see the events and their

material manifestations in close proximity to the masses whose lives were woven around them.

Place names which are a part and parcel of culture are also a part of language. Culture and place names cannot be separated. We can say that culture without place names is incomplete. Above all, place names are frequently accepted into the language of a new population. Place names, as a treasure house of information regarding our socio-cultural history, in the era where the historical importance of place names has been endorsed beyond doubt. In the light of modern historiographical trends the importance of place names is very important for the students of all disciplines of social sciences in general and for the history students in particular.

A question often asked is – How old are our place names? It appears that most date from the early middle ages i.e. about one thousand years ago. Many may be twice as old. A study of mediaeval manuscripts referring to deeds, wills and land ownership shows us that most of these place names exist today even if in a corrupted form. Unfortunately very little of these names are recorded. Sir Aurel Stein in the second part of his translation of Kalhana's *Rajatarangini* has given a detailed memoir of the ancient geography of Kashmir. It makes a wonderful reading and transports one mentally to the glory that Kashmir was! The most interesting and absorbing account is about relating the present day place names and existing ruins of buildings to their ancient origin along with description given in various chapters of the main chronicle. Nevertheless these place names remain in the memories of local people, most of whom are now reaching advanced years. Place names are less personal, less intimate and a matter of public concern⁸. As each generation passes more and more of this information is lost. To use a modern phrase, place names are a "*non-renewable resource*". If they are not collected now, they will be lost forever.

Besides the place names, built heritage, apart from being a cultural asset and resource inherited from the past, also defines a community's distinct identity, its history and its creative vibrancy.

Effective management of these assets and resources is of great civilizational value. This encompasses both natural heritage, such as special environment assets and resources like lakes and hills, historical buildings, vernacular structures and city spaces. They reflect the skills, talent and unique aesthetics of local artists, artisans, designers, connoisseurs, and a trait relation between common people and their sense of tradition. As people share and present their traditions, they create a unique mix of inspiration and ideas and a range of very valuable skills⁹. These assets are very important to cultural vitality and are also integral to the development and retention of local talent.

Most of the heritage buildings, if conserved, have greater economic, cultural and social value. The revitalization of built heritage in Europe and elsewhere has been on a growing interest by domestic and international tourists¹⁰. It is important that the built heritage of Kashmir is used in sustainable way and is not degraded. This is too significant in areas like Pulwama where the restoration of heritage properties has positive benefits, of encouraging cultural revival, tourism promotion and a sense of distinct identity.

Archaeology is now the major source of fresh evidence, since it is unlikely that large number of literary sources still remain to be discovered¹¹. It not only provides new evidence in the form of the material remains of the past culture, but, precisely because this evidence is tangible, it allows of a more accurate reconstruction of the past. Thus an objective analysis of place names and archaeological remains will help us in recollecting the history of Kashmir. The history revealed by place names and archaeological antiques¹² is considered to be the most accurate item because it is the longest lasting. It can very unlikely to be wrong. Watch spelling of a place name, might be spelt as said by illiterate ancestor, or might be confused with another place name familiar to a later ancestor. In this dissertation an attempt has been made to through a fresh light on the history as revealed by place names of Kashmir in general and Pulwama tehsil in particular, which has not so far been brought to light owing to the historians pre-occupation with the so called original sources such as chronicles, administrative manuals and official records etc. As a discipline, place names has

so far been studied and treated as anthropologically, ethnologically and sociologically, but no serious work has been done to make use of this rich treasure of knowledge as a source of studying the socio-cultural aspects of the common people. In our own state, the people showing the least attention towards the recording and preservation of different folk versions with regard to the historical background of the place names of different villages and towns regarding which they have some worthwhile information. Our primary concern has, however, been to show how a useful examination of place names of different villages of Kashmir can help us in reconstructing the past. We have not isolated data with regard to place names for the purpose of analysis rather it has been our endeavor to examine this category of source material in particular socio-historical context, and while doing so we have not totally ignored other relevant sources too.

Under the heading of archaeological remains we may discuss the information derived from inscriptions, numismatics and monuments. It is now truism to say that significant new evidence on early periods of history is more likely to come from archaeological data than from literary sources. This makes the close collaboration between the historian and the archaeologist imperative. As regard inscriptions, they are of very great historical value. Where the literary sources are reticent or obscure, inscriptions fortunately come to our rescue. Many thousands of them, the earliest belonging to about the fourth or fifth century B. C. have been unearthed, and perhaps a large number still await the archaeologists spade¹³. As they are engraved on stones and metals, they cannot be tampered with without detection. Consequently, we can be sure while using the material from inscriptions that they contain what was originally written. While in case of books, there is the possibility of interpolations by known or unknown authors, which is not the case with inscriptions. Their genuineness cannot be doubted. The inscriptions also give us a correct idea of the method of writing followed at a time when they were actually inscribed. The character of their script also enables us to fix their appropriate age. Location of the place or inscription can also through some valuable light on their past. To sum up the

inscriptions are invaluable documents of Kashmir history, besides being the monumental works of the art of penmanship¹⁴.

The second category of archaeological remains is numismatics which enlightens us a great deal regarding the history of ancient Kashmir. Coins help us to build up the history of the country in many ways. They give us names of kings who ruled at various times in different parts of the country. In many cases the coins are the only information we have regarding the existence of certain kings. The coins also help us to fix up the chronology. However, the third category is the ancient monuments like buildings, statues of stone or metal, terracotta and ornamental and decorative fragments, pottery etc. that provide us lot of useful and reliable information¹⁵. The progress of archaeological work in Kashmir in future is bound to enrich our knowledge of ancient Kashmir history. Hence our study of place names and archaeological remains of Pulwama is understood to lead us to the better understanding of the past of the area. Nevertheless, the archaeological and literary sources testify to the changing history of Kashmir, the place names not only corroborate it but also provide an enduring evidence of its intensity.

A case in reference here in the study under reference is tehsil Pulwama, one of the major tehsils of present day district Pulwama. The Pulwama district in general and the Pulwama tehsil in particular abound both in tradition and history. No serious attempt has until now been made to bring to focus the rich historical and folklore material, which contain priceless treasure of historical information. Be it the linguistic diversity with regard to the place names of the area, temple structures, legends, anecdotes and traditions connected with the area of study, the tehsil Pulwama offers tangible matrix of historical investigation and enquiry.

It is in the light of its historical dynamics and the rich and colorful treasure of traditional relics, that the researcher opted the area under reference for the present study.

The map of Pulwama is rich tapestry of place names. These names reflect the diverse history and heritage of the tehsil. The study of the villages of Pulwama tehsil separately is not only important and useful but also necessary

because every village has a unique and a definite history. Moreover the study of micro-history is more important than the macro-history because the micro-history (local history) is mostly based on non-conventional sources of history such as oral sources, folk tales, legends and local records etc.

Pulwama was known as Panwangam in antiquity, and later as Pulgam¹⁶. It is a town and there is a notified area committee in Pulwama district. Pulwama being a part of the beautiful Valley is bounded by Srinagar in the north, Budgam district in the west, Shopian district in the south and by district Kulgam in the east. The district was formed in 1979 by segregation of tehsils Pulwama, Shopian and Tral from district Anantnag. As a result of bifurcation of the erstwhile Pulwama district in the two districts viz., Shopian and Pulwama. Pulwama district reduces to an area of 1090 sq. km's. The Pulwama district (excluding district Shopian) as per census 2001 consists of 321 census villages, out of which 08 are uninhabited. The district is administratively divided into four tehsils that is Pulwama, Pampore, Tral and Awantopora, which have further been grouped into five community blocks viz., Pulwama, Kellar, Kakapora, Tral and Pampore for development purposes. The administrative center of the district is situated at Pulwama which is about 31 km's from district Srinagar.

Administrative set up: Census villages – 321; Revenue villages – 321; Patwari Halqas – 89; Panchayat Halqas – 186; Community Development Blocks – 5; Girdawar Circles – 30; Nahabats – 10; Tehsils – 4; Municipal Committees – 5.

Tourist Places in Pulwama District: Kungwattan, Aripal (Tral), Tar Sar Marsar (Tral), Keller, Shikargah (Tral).

Famous personalities of Pulwama District: Great Kashmiri poet-Mehjoor; poet Sochi Kral; Haba Khatoon; Lal Ded; Wahab Khar and many more.

Economy of Pulwama District: Agriculture is the main activity of this district. There are number of large and small scale industries existing in the district for-example, play Board Industries- Pampore, Woyen Cement Factory, Joinery Mill-Pampore, Brick and Tile Factory Pampore, Govt. Cement Factory-Khrew. Small

Scale Industrial units which are generally skill based like Food based, wood based and Artisan based.

Geography

Pulwama is located at 32°53'N 74°55'E / 32.88°N 74.92°E / 32.88; 74.92. It has an average elevation of 1630 meters (5347 feet).

Demographics

As per 2001 census, district Pulwama has a population of 4.41 lacks¹⁷ which constitutes about 4.35% of the total population of the state. Males constitute 59% of the population and females 41%. Pulwama has an average literacy rate of 62%, higher than the national average of 59.5%: male literacy is 75%, and female literacy is 43%. In Pulwama, 10% of the population is under 6 years of age.

District Pulwama is famous for archaeological monuments especially those left by Lalitaditya, and Avantivarman, religious shrines like that of Khan-Kahi Faiz Panah of Shah-i-Hamadan^{RA} at Tral, temple of Jawala Mukhi at Khrew, temple of Narendrasvami built by Narendraditya 483-490 A. D. at village Payar, Shankara Asthapan of about sixth century A. D. at village Wahibugh, Batuknath Mandir at village Tahab, Gurduwara Chatti Padshahi Shadimarg, Historical caves at Koil, Ramu and Rajpora etc. Brarimaej Mandir at village Murran, Mangleshure Asthapan at village Manghom, Mughal Road, the famous *Shahrah* is also a communication path of the district with other parts of country and many other temples and Muslim shrines and historical springs and caves give great historical importance to the district. District Pulwama thus abounds in ruins and remnants which gives it a strong historical foundation.

The district is reported to be one of the pretty spots on the earth, because of its congenial climate, innumerable springs, streams, waterfalls, fragrant flowers, delicious fruits and other natural sceneries. Besides, district Pulwama is famous all over the world for saffron cultivation which is mainly grown in karewa lands of Pampore, Kakapora and Pulwama blocks. Apple and saffron are the main crops of district Pulwama. Rice, wheat, maize, mustard is also grown

here in abundance. Pulwama is often called the 'Anand of Kashmir' or '*Dudha-Kul of Kashmir*' on account of its high milk production.

The present study is based on wide range of sources, both conventional and non-conventional. Among the conventional sources the focus is on the primary sources which include administrative reports, census reports, private dairies and newspapers. Optimum benefit has been taken from eclectic variety of non-conventional sources viz., folk narratives, oral history and interviews of people who are in advanced years. For obtaining meaningful information the random interviews with the people of cross sections of society of the area under study has been carried out by the researcher.

In the present study the researcher has tried to trace the historical background of many place names of tehsil Pulwama. The attempt to discuss and classify them according to their origin reveals many interesting facts of significance regarding micro-history, social behavior, anthropology etc., more importantly, such names indicate the gradual growth of regional languages through semantics, pronunciation, and the like. Studies in regional languages would remain incomplete without a working knowledge of the concerned places. Besides, the researcher has discussed the importance of archaeological remains of tehsil Pulwama.

The dissertation is divided into three chapters. The first chapter examines briefly the historical importance of oral sources. The second chapter delineates the history as revealed by place names. And the last chapter elaborates the historical importance of archaeological remains of tehsil Pulwama.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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2. See Upham Warren, *Minnesota Geographic Names: Their Origin and Historic Significance*, Biblio Bazaar, 2009.
3. The word "toponymy" is derived from the Greek words τόπος ("place") and όνομα ("name"). Toponymy is itself a branch of onomastics, the study of names of all kinds. Toponymy is distinct from, though often confused with etymology, which is the study of the origins of words.
4. Powicke, Frederick Maurice, reviewing Armstrong, Mawer, *Stanton and Dickens The Place-Names of Cumberland* (1950-53) in *The English Historical Review* 69 (April 1954), p. 312.
5. Mitti, Kaups, "Finnish Place Names in Minnesota: A Study in Cultural Transfer". *The Geographical Review*, Published by American Geographical Society, 1966, pp. 377-397.
6. See McArthur, Lewis L., *Oregon Geographic Names* (Seventh Edition), Oregon Historical Society Press, Portland, Oregon, 2003.
7. Aymard, Mairice and Mukia, Harbans, (ed.), *French Studies in History, The Inheritance*. New Delhi: Orient Longman, 1988, vol. I, Introduction, pp. 2-5.
8. Gwinn, Robert P., Chairman, Board of Directors; Norton, Peter B., President; Henry Robert, M. C., General Editor, *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*, Chicago Encyclopedia Britannica, 1995, vol. XXIV, p. 735.
9. J&K, Indian national trust for art and cultural heritage, *Cultural Resource Mapping of Srinagar City*, Jammu and Kashmir: INTACH, 2010, vol. I. Preface, p. 4.
10. Ibid.
11. Thapar, Romila, *Ancient Indian Social History*, New Delhi: Orient Longman Limited, 1978, p.18.
12. An antique is a collectible object that has a high value because of its considerable age. Some old buildings, famous books, paintings and art are a few examples of antiques.

13. Tripathi, Ramashankar, *History of Ancient India*, New Delhi; Motilal Banarsidass; 1987, p. 6.
14. Qadri, Afzal Dr. S. M., *Cultural Heritage of Kashmir*, (ed.), Dean Student's Welfare, University of Kashmir, 1997, pp. 41-42.
15. Ibid. p. 30.
16. See Dewan, Parvez, *Jammu-Kashmir-Ladakh: Ladakh*, Manas Publications 2009, "*The original name of Pulwama town (from which the district takes its name) was Panwangam. Over the centuries it got shortened to Pulgam. This in turn gradually changed to Pulwama*".
17. Population of Pulwama by Tehsils (in lacks): Pulwama (2.37); Tral (0.75); Pampore (0.64); Awantipora (0.65).

CHAPTER-1



ORAL TRADITION AS A SOURCE OF HISTORY

CHAPTER-I

ORAL TRADITION AS A SOURCE OF HISTORY

Knowledge no longer requires application to reality; knowledge is what gets passed on silently without comment, from one text to another. Ideas are propagated and disseminated anonymously, they are requested without attribution; they have literally become udees rescues: what matters is that they are there to be repeated, echoed, and re-echoed uncritically.

– Edward William Said¹

Memories are living histories and contentious historical source. According to the African proverb, *'Every old man that dies is a library that burns'*². Over the past sixty years oral history- *'the interviewing of eye witness participants in the events of the past for the purposes of historical reconstruction'*³- has transformed the practice of contemporary history in many countries. Oral history preservation is the field that deals with the care and upkeep of oral history materials, whatever format they may be in. Oral history is a method of historical documentation, using interviews with living survivors of the time being investigated. Oral history often touches on topics scarcely touched on by written documents, and by doing so; fill in the gaps of records that make up early historical documents. Commenting on the relevance of oral sources, G. J. Renier aptly remarks, *"Among historical traces, along with the written traces, the oral traces no less serve as an authentic source of history. These traces, we find in human society in the form of institutions, customs of the people, religious beliefs, social doctrines, ethical principles, traditions, legends and superstitions"*⁴. The most distinctive contribution of oral history has been to include within the historical record the experiences and perspectives of groups of people who might otherwise have been hidden from history, perhaps written about by social observers or in official documents, but only rarely preserved in personal papers or scraps of autobiographical writing. Through oral history interviews working

class men and women, indigenous people or members of cultural minorities, among others, have inscribed their experiences on the historical record and offered their own interpretations of history. Interviews have also documented aspects of historical experience which tend to be missing from other sources.

Oral history has enriched the historical enterprise in other ways too. Oral history research is not the privileged preserve of academic or professional historians, and groups as diverse as school students, day centre residents or development project workers have all proved to be adept interviewers. Most significantly and uniquely, oral historians speak to their sources and this active human relationship transforms the practice of history in several ways. The narrator not only recalls the past but also asserts his or her interpretation of that past and in participatory oral history projects the interviewee can be a historian as well as the source. Moreover, for some practitioners oral history has not just been about making histories. In certain projects a primary aim has been the empowerment of individuals or social groups through the process of remembering and reinterpreting the past, with an emphasis on the value of process as much as historical product. In this regard oral history has influenced and overlapped with some of the most important contemporary uses of historical memory.

Oral history has become an international movement in historical research. Oral historians in different countries have approached the collection, analysis, and dissemination of oral history in different ways. It should also be noted that there are many ways of creating oral histories and carrying out the study of oral history even within individual national contexts. Contemporary oral history involves recording or transcribing eyewitness accounts of historical events.

Oral history is the collection and study of historical information about individuals, families, important events, or everyday life using audiotapes, videotapes, or transcriptions of planned interviews. These interviews are conducted with people who participated in or observed past events and whose

memories and perceptions of these are to be preserved as an aural record for future generations. Oral history strives to obtain information from different perspectives, and most of these cannot be found in written sources. Oral history also refers to information gathered in this manner and to a written work (published or unpublished) based on such data, often preserved in archives and large libraries.

The term is sometimes used in a more general sense to refer to any information about past events that people who experienced them tell anybody else, but professional historians usually consider this to be oral tradition. However, as the Columbia Encyclopedia explains⁵:

“Primitive societies have long relied on oral tradition to preserve a record of the past in the absence of written histories. In Western society, the use of oral material goes back to the early Greek historians Herodotus and Thucydides, both of whom made extensive use of oral reports from witnesses. The modern concept of oral history was developed in the 1960s by Allan Nevins and his associates at Columbia University”.

Columbia Encyclopedia further states⁶:

“The discipline came into its own in the 1960’s and early 70’s when inexpensive tape recorders were available to document such rising social movements as civil rights, feminism, and anti–Vietnam War protest. Authors such as Studs Terkel, Alex Haley, and Oscar Lewis have employed oral history in their books, many of which are largely based on interviews. In another important example of the genre, a massive archive covering the oral history of American music has been compiled at the Yale School of Music. By the end of the 20th century oral history had become a respected discipline in many colleges and universities. At that time the

Italian historian Alessandro Portelli and his associates began to study the role that memory itself, whether accurate or faulty, plays in the themes and structures of oral history. Their published work has since become standard material in the field, and many oral historians now include in their research the study of the subjective memory of the persons they interview”.

But yet historians have been notoriously wary of memory as a historical source. In challenging orthodoxies about historical sources, methods and aims and by using memory for contemporary political purposes, oral history has generated fierce debates – for example, about the reliability of memory, the psychology of the interview relationship or the interpretation and re-presentation of people’s lives; or more generally about the relationships between memory and history, past and present, scholarship and politics. As far the reliability of oral traditional history is concerned, broadly speaking, it is one of the most controversial and even inflammatory questions to perplex humanists and social scientists. It has raged since Euhemerus in the fourth century B.C. argued that the gods of the myths were deified heroes of history. Under the allegorical and symbolical interpretations of myth prevailing from classical times on euhemerism, it became a dirty word, until nineteenth century, anthropology brought fresh new materials into the discussion.

The points of genesis and patterns of development for oral history have varied from one country to another. The earliest method of collecting oral history was through memory. With the loss of elders who were willing to preserve and pass along these histories, cultural memories began to vanish. With the advent of the written word, it became possible for cultures to preserve their histories without the memory of selected few. Spoken word was transcribed, and the eye witness accounts of those who lived through both significant and every day events were able to be saved for future generations to study. This method of historical preservation was augmented with the invention of different methods to record sound. Spoken word can now be recorded on video tape, or through

newer digital methods. The first paradigm transformation and the genesis of contemporary oral history occurred after Second World War. The timing and pattern of this emergence differed markedly around the world. For example, the first organized oral history project was initiated by Allan Nevins at Columbia University in New York in 1948, and his interest in archival recordings with white male elites was representative of early oral history activity in the United States. In Britain in the 1950's and 1960's oral history pioneers were more interested in recording the experiences of so called ordinary working people and had initial links with folklore studies; George Ewart Evans, for example determined to ask the fellows who cut the hay. The lived experience of working class, women's or black history was undocumented or ill-recorded and oral history was an essential source for the 'history from below' fostered by politically committed social historians in Britain and around the world from the 1960's onwards.

Alex Haley's best-selling books, *Autobiography of Malcolm X* (first published in 1965) and *Roots: The saga of an American family* (1976) encouraged black Americans to explore their past and helped to popularize oral history and family history in the United States. Paul Thompson, a social historian at the university of Essex, played a leading role in the creation of the British Oral History Society in the early 1970's and the subsequent development of an international oral history movement from the end of the decade. His book, *The Voice of the Past: Oral History* became a standard text book for oral historians around the world when it was first published in 1978.

The second paradigm shift in oral history was, in part, a response to positivist critics, for the most part traditional documentary historians of a conservative political persuasion who feared the politics of people's history and who targeted the unreliability of memory as its weakness. At the core of criticisms of oral history in the early 1970's was the assertion that memory was distorted by physical deterioration and nostalgia in old age, by the personal bias of both interviewer and interviewee, and by the influence of collective and retrospective versions of the past. By the late 1970's imaginative oral historians

turned these criticisms on their head and argued that the so called unreliability of memory was also its strength, and that the subjectivity of memory provided clues not only about the meanings of historical experience but also about the relationships between past and present, between memory and personal identity, and between individual and collective memory⁷. Besides, Portelli challenged the critics of ‘unreliable memory’ head-on by arguing that ‘what makes oral history different. Above all orality, narrative form, subjectivity, the ‘different credibility’ of memory, and the relationship between interviewer and interviewee should be considered as strengths rather than as weaknesses, a resource rather than a problem. Portelli’s article, what makes oral history different, is a subtle exploration of ‘the peculiarities of oral history’ and an ideal introduction for newcomers to the field⁸.

Though conservative historians were the most vocal critics of oral history in the 1970’s, oral history was also challenged from the Left. In the late 1970’s and early 1980’s some socialist historians were particularly critical of the notion that the method of oral history was necessarily radical and democratic. The popular Memory Group’s writing highlighted the political possibilities and contradictions for oral history projects which had a radical agenda⁹. Yet in the early 1980’s the political scope and impact of oral history and memory work was still comparatively limited. It is noteworthy to mention here that until the end of the 19th century, history as an academic discipline had not come out of the monopoly of the Rankian School of historiography, who believed it to be the exclusive concern of great political personalities and their tastes and dislikes of governance. But at the end of the 20th century this traditional approach of history was vehemently attacked. One of the most vocal of these critics was Karl Lamprecht who raised his voice against the German historical establishment. He also called for a ‘Collective History’ which emphasized seeking concepts from a wide range of disciplines. Lamprecht has rightly declared that “*History is a socio-psychological science*”.

A third transformation in oral history involved a paradigmatic shift in approach to the ‘objectivity’ of the oral historian as interviewer and analyst.

Throughout the 1980's positivist notions of the researcher objectivity were increasingly questioned by feminist theorists, post-modern anthropologists and qualitative sociologists and by some interviewers who were deeply reflective about the relationships they formed with their narrators. Oral historians were also influenced by the developments in reminiscence work that highlighted the benefits of remembering for older people and remind interviewers to consider the value of exchange for both parties¹⁰. In an article published in the Oral History Review in 1997, Valerie yow argues that from the late1980's a new oral history paradigm permits awareness and use of the interactive process of interviewer and narrator, of interviewer and content¹¹. Valerie Yow's article also exemplifies the interdisciplinarity that has been one of the most significant features of oral history form the 1980's onwards. Though memory is now a respected historical source, history is just one of many academic disciplines and emergent intellectual fields that work with memories. Yow writes about the 'trickle over effect' from other disciplines such as qualitative sociology¹², anthropology¹³, biographical and literary studies¹⁴, feminist theory and life review psychology¹⁵. To this list we add cultural studies¹⁶, linguistics, communication and narrative studies¹⁷, folklore studies¹⁸ and interdisciplinary work exploring the relationship between memory, narrative and personal identity¹⁹. While theoretical and methodological developments in each of these fields have enriched the practice of oral history, oral historians themselves, as represented by the authors in this and other sections, have made substantial contributions to the theory, method and politics of qualitative research and memory through their interdisciplinary reflections on interview relationships and the interpretation and use of recorded memories.

Daniel James also considers the importance of remembering - as '*embodied in cultural practices such as storytelling*'- for individuals and for their communities, and poses the problem of modern memory for working-class communities faced with deindustrialization and the destruction of social and collective memory. In this regard his work exemplifies the '*ascent of "memory" as an object of investigation by historians*' in the last two decades of the

twentieth century. Omer Bartov offers a compelling explanation for this trend, in which memories recorded by oral historians have played a significant role.

The stream of ‘memory studies’ was clearly related to the pervasive cultural sense of an end of an era, both as a chronological fact and as a reflection of rapid socio-economic transformation. The ‘rediscovery’ of Maurice Halbwach’s theories on collective memory; the publication of Pierre Nora’s massive tomes on lieux de memoire; the growing scholarly interest in the links between history and memory, documentation and testimony; the popularity of works of fiction and films on memory; debates among psychologists over ‘deep’ and repressed memory; and not least, the public controversies on forms and implications of official commemoration. All seemed to indicate that ‘memory’ had firmly established itself as a central historical category²⁰.

In the past decade oral historians have been grappling with the technical, ethical and epistemological implications of the digital revolution²¹. In the concluding contribution to this review of Critical Developments, Michael Frisch writes from the cusp of the digital frontier. He argues that the digitization of sound and image will challenge the current dominance of transcription and return aurality to oral history. Furthermore, non-text reliant digital index and search mechanisms will enable users to find and hear the extracts they are looking for in their own interviews and across countless interviews from other projects and will enable imaginative, unforeseen interpretations. Frisch concludes that we are witnessing the emergence of a ‘post documentary sensibility’ which breaks down the distinction between the oral history document source and the oral history documentary product, and suggests that *‘new digital tools and the rich landscape of practice they define may become powerful resources in restoring one of the original appeals of oral history- to open new dimensions of understanding and engagement through the broadly inclusive sharing and interrogation of memory’*.

All history depends ultimately upon its social purpose²². For as we know every human activity has a social aspect. The human personality, an incredibly

complicated cerebral being, highly susceptible to impressions and ardently striving for survival and self-expression, reflects in true sense the outcome of a social context; but it has been observed that in the conventional sources of history, the tacit assumptions in a given society were advertently or inadvertently overlooked and thus the social context was neglected to a great extent. With the focus on interdisciplinary approach, the truth of the historical situation, phenomenon or period began to be rediscovered from new relics and the traces embodied in creative and other forms of popular literature²³. Nevertheless in the past it has been handed down by oral tradition and written chronicle. Sometimes the social purpose history is obscure. There are academics that pursue fact-finding research on remote problems, avoiding any entanglement with wider interpretations or contemporary issues, insisting only on the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake.

The Bengali folklore expert Mazhar-ul-Islam maintains that fundamental elements of folklore are social products which constitute the basis of any historical text or study. Since the subject matter of history is human, his activities and his multi-layered surroundings, therefore, social context holds extraordinary weightage in the process of historical investigation. To quote Mazhar-ul-Islam²⁴:

“The elements of folklore are social products, they are created, retained and transmitted by the folk and as such, folklore is the mirror of the people – not dead like a piece of glass, but a living one” .

Through history ordinary people seek to understand the upheavals and changes which they experience in their own lives: wars, social transformations like the changing position of youth, technological changes like the end of steam power, or personal migration to a new community²⁵. Family history especially can give an individual a strong sense of a much longer personal lifespan, which will even survive their own death. Through local history a village or town seeks

meaning for its own changing character and newcomers can gain a sense of roots in personal historical knowledge.

Oral history is not necessarily an instrument of change; it depends upon the spirit in which it is used. Nevertheless, oral history certainly can be a means for transforming both the content and the purpose of history. It can be used to change the focus of history itself, and open up new areas of inquiry; it can break down barriers between teachers and students, between generations, between educational institutions and the world outside; and in the writing of history it can give back to the people who made and experienced history through their own words, a central place.

Until the present century, the focus of history was essentially political: a documentation of the struggle for power, in which the lives of ordinary people, or the workings of the economy or religion, were given little attention except in times of crisis such as the Reformation, the English Civil War, or the French Revolution. Historical time was divided up by reigns and dynasties. Even local history was concerned with the administration of the hundred and parish rather than the day-to-day life of the community and the street. This was partly because historians, who themselves then belonged to the administering and governing classes, thought that this was what mattered most. They had developed no interest in the point of view of the labourer, unless he was not specifically troublesome; nor-being men-would they have wished to inquire into the changing life experiences of women. But even if they had wished to write a different kind of history, it would have been far from easy, for the raw material from which history was written, the documents had been kept or destroyed by people with the same priorities. The more personal, local and unofficial a document, the less likely it was to survive. The very power structure worked as a great recording machine shaping the past in its own image.

Consequently, even as the scope of history has widened, the original political and administrative focus has remained. Where ordinary people have been brought in; it has been generally as statistical aggregates derived from some

earlier administrative investigation²⁶. Thanks to the historians and social scientists who played a commendable role in laying foundations of the new historiographical schools, on behalf of which no study of sociological or cultural dimension of human society can be possible unless and until, a historian or a researcher takes cognizance of group behavior, unconscious state of mind, folk ways, and ritual profile of a society or a religious group. Without discovering these abstract psycho-social traits, which play significant role in shaping the collective psyche of the society, no objective study of group behavior or collective mentality of people can be ascertained²⁷. How geo-climatic conditions, economic health, belief pattern, political landscape determine the collective make-up of a society and how a society undergoes through a process of social tension and conflict, the clue about all developments we come across through the study of popular lore or different categories of people's literature. Social history abounds in references about legendary tales, operational in a particular linguistic area or cultural region. These popular tales point to those semi-historic truths which one way or other form the nucleus of the popular history²⁸.

In the most general sense, once the life experience of people of all kinds can be used as its raw material, a new dimension is given to history. Oral history provides a source quite similar in character to published autobiography, but much wider in scope. The overwhelming majority of published autobiographies are from a restricted group of political, social and intellectual leaders, and even when the historian is lucky enough to find an autobiography from the particular place, time, and social group which he happens to need; it may well give little or no attention to the point at issue. Oral historians, by contrast, may choose precisely whom to interview and what to ask about. The interview will provide, too, a means of discovering written documents and photographs which would not have otherwise been traced. The confines of the scholar's world are no longer the well-thumbed volumes of the old catalogue. Oral historians can think now as if they themselves were publishers: imagine what evidence is needed, seek it out and capture it.

In all these fields of history, by introducing new evidence from the underside, by shifting the focus and opening new areas of inquiry, by challenging some of the assumptions and accepted judgments of historians, by bringing recognition to substantial groups of people who had been ignored, a cumulative process of transformation is set in motion. The scope of historical writing itself is enlarged and enriched and at the same time its social message changes. History becomes, to put it simply, more democratic. But there is another dimension to this change, of equal importance. The process of writing history changes along with the content. The use of oral evidence breaks through the barriers between the chroniclers and their audience; between the educational institution and outside world.

This change springs from the essentially creative and co-operative nature of the oral history method. Of course oral evidence once recorded can be used by lone scholars in libraries just like any other type of documentary source. But to be content with this is to lose a key advantage of the method: its flexibility, the ability to pin down evidence just where it is needed. Once historians start to interview they find themselves inevitably working with others—at the least, with their informants. And to be a successful interviewer a new set of skills is needed, including an understanding of human relationships. However, the co-operative nature of the oral history approach has led to a radical questioning of the fundamental relationship between history and the community for interpretation and presentation by the professional historian.

Oral historians have travelled a long way from their original aim and there is, undoubtedly, some danger of conflict between the two. On the level of the interview itself, for example, there have been telling criticisms of a relationship with informants in which a middle class professional determines who is to be interviewed and what is to be discussed and then disappears with a tape of somebody's life which they never hear about again and if they did, might be indignant at the unintended meanings imposed on their words. There are clear social advantages in the contrasting ideal of a self-selected group, or an open public meeting, which focuses on equal discussion and encourages local

publication of its results; and of individual recording sessions which are conversations rather than directed interviews. But there are also drawbacks in the alternative.

Oral sources are oral sources. Scholars are willing to admit that the actual document is the recorded tape; but almost all go on to work on the transcripts, and it is only transcripts that are published²⁹. Occasionally, tapes are actually destroyed: a symbolic case of the destruction of the spoken word. The transcript turns aural objects into visual ones, which inevitably implies changes and interpretation. The different efficacy of recordings, as compared to transcripts-for classroom purposes, for instance-can only be appreciated by direct experience. This is one reason why historians believe it is unnecessary to give excessive attention to the quest for new and closer methods of transcription. Expecting the transcript to replace the tape for scientific purposes is equivalent to doing art criticism on reproductions, or literary criticism on translations. The most literal translation is hardly ever the best, and a truly faithful translation always implies a certain amount of invention. The same may be true for transcription of oral sources.

The disregard of the orality of oral sources has a direct bearing on interpretative theory. The first aspect which is usually stressed is origin: oral sources give us information about illiterate people or social groups whose written history is either missing or distorted. We can salvage our history from the debris of time by putting the pieces of oral history together. Oral evidence reveals to us the psychic development and intellectual evolution of the man. The different stages of his social evolution are imprinted on his psyche. These psyche notes are variously expressed through arts and crafts he is engaged with. The way he adjusts to the world outside, his behavior and the patterns of the relations he creates with objective world reveal his cultural bases. This collective consciousness and this shared experience are revealed through oral tradition. Another aspect concerns content: the daily life and material culture of these people and groups. However, these are not specific to oral sources. Emigrant's letters, for instance, have the same origin and content, but are written. On the

other hand, many oral history projects have collected interviews with members of social groups who use writing, and have been concerned with topics usually covered by the standard written archival material. Therefore, origin and content are not sufficient to distinguish oral sources from the range of sources used by social history in general; thus many theories of oral history are, in fact, theories of social history as a whole³⁰.

Oral sources from non hegemonic classes are linked to the tradition of the folk narrative. In this tradition distinctions between narrative genres are perceived differently than in the written tradition of the educated classes. This is true of the generic distinction between 'factual' and 'artistic' narratives, between 'events' and feeling or imagination. While the perception of an account as 'true' is relevant as much to legend as to personal experience and historical memory, there are no formal oral genres specifically destined to transmit historical information; historical, poetical and legendary narratives often become inextricably mixed up³¹. The result is narratives in which the boundary between what takes place outside the narrator and what happens inside, between what concerns the individual and what concerns the group, may become more elusive than in established written genres, so that personal 'truth' may coincide with shared 'imagination'.

Each of these factors can be revealed by formal and stylistic factors. The greater or lesser presence of formalized materials (proverbs, songs formulas and stereotypes) may measure the degree in which a collective viewpoint exists within an individual's narrative these shifts between standard language and dialect are often a sign of the control which speakers have over the narrative.

The first thing that makes oral history different, therefore, is that it tells us less about events than about their meaning. This does not imply that oral history has no factual validity. Interviews often reveal unknown events or unknown aspects of known events; they always cast new light on unexplored areas of the daily life of the non-hegemonic classes. From this point of view, the only problem posed by oral sources is that of verification.

But the unique and precious element which oral sources force upon the historian and which no other sources possess in equal measure is the speaker's subjectivity. If the approach to research is broad and articulated enough, a cross section of the subjectivity of a group or class may emerge. Borrowing a literary category from the Russian formalists, we might say that oral sources, especially from non-hegemonic groups, are a very useful integration of other sources as far as the fibula, the logical causal sequence of the story goes, but they become unique and necessary because of their plot the way in which the story materials are arranged by narrators in order to tell the story³². The organization of the narrative reveals a great deal of the speaker's relationships to the history.

It is noteworthy to mention here that the issues of traditional history were cogently defined and formulated for the modern period by Alfred Nutt, the English publisher and folklorist and Celtic scholar. In two papers, "*Problems of Heroic Legend*" (1892), and "*History, Tradition, and Historic Myths*" (1901), Nutt tended to take a negative view on oral history, but called for more evidence before the problems could be attacked.

These problems are: in how far heroic legend is indebted to historic fact; in what manner does it transform historic facts to its own needs; what is the nature of the portion which owes nothing to history and which we call mythic; does this portion picture forth man's memory of the past or embody his ancient imaginings of the material universe; is the marked similarity which obtains between the great heroic cycles due to a common conception of life, to descent from a common original, or to borrowing from one another³³?

Sweeping claims have been made both assailing and upholding the validity of oral traditional history. On the one hand Lord Raglan, vociferous champion of the skeptics, denies any scrap of historical truth to traditions that have weathered a century and half. The great folk epics, the cherished sagas, the heroic legends and ballads, even the Christ story itself, display the same mythic structure. These are stories once told about gods worshiped in fertility rites. In *The Hero* in 1937 Lord Ragan assailed the previous supporters of euhemerism in

mythology and historicity in local traditions, such as George Laurence Gomme and William Ridgeway, with a broad side attack on all myths and sagas individually, and on folk memory in general. He resorted to this strategy because the euhemerists customarily defended one hero in terms of another, saying that Siegfried was as historical as Achilles. Raglan asserted, and continued to assert at every opportunity, that savages and illiterates lacked any sense of chronology before their fathers' lifetimes, and that their orally transmitted history is compounded with absurdities and anachronisms. How can the historicists winnow out fabulous monsters and dragons and call the residue fact? If part of the narrative is fiction, why not the whole³⁴?

Traditions may not be fully conscious but still have an effect on family memories and actions. This is more controversial perhaps. Dr. T. O. Beedelman rejected all historical value for the traditions which he felt were all only products of a given cognition pattern they reflected but a word view and the categories of perception current at the time they were written down³⁵. Traditions, myths and images current in particular epochs or in particular cultures themselves affect family and individual memories, and shape the ways they represent the past, even their own experiences.

When we look at the products of memories, whether autobiographies, life stories, or the records of oral interviews, we should also reflect on how they have been generated and expressed. We can certainly value them as rich sources for our understanding of family and personal history and for the experiential spheres some-times neglected in other approaches. But we must also remember that they are not limpid empirical data, transmitted by some mechanical process.

History, as it deals with the whole life of man in past society, nothing human is alien to it, and nothing human escapes its net like no other subject, it gives an insight into human behavior in all its aspects. In the ever changing historical landscape, the subject history is now defined as summarized collective experience of society; the sum total of human experience cannot only be tangible by keeping it confined to a limited space of conventional sources. To ensure its

understanding in some authentic, reliable and comprehensive manner, the subject, history, is studied with the help of multiple sources and approaches. Until recently, historians treated non conventional source as unhistorical and attempts were made to keep this set of popular evidence out of the orbit of historical analysis and investigation. Not to talk of professional historians even the anthropologists vehemently criticized an attempt to use oral traditions for the reconstructions of historical past.

Presently historians do not wholly depend on archival sources and traditional methods of historical inquiry; instead, stress is laid upon interdisciplinary approach and due credit has been given to learn from neighboring disciplines in sociology, anthropology, linguistics, agro-economy, geography, psychology and folklore. The present approach received more currency in the light of historical doctrine set by Febre and Bloch, who opposed to that dominance of political history their ambition was to replace it with what they called a '*wider and more human history*'. A history which would include all human activities and which would be less concern with the narrative of events than with the analysis of structure, a term which has become a favorite among French historians of the so called "*Annals school*".

The study of oral tradition serves manifold purposes to the reader. It acquaints the reader with multi-layered message expressed in direct or metaphoric way. Take for instance, any sort of oral literature, we will find most probably at its root the reverberation of age old collective experience. Any folk saying, or proverb, or riddle in any dialect, not only refers to a particular psycho-social intention of the particular society; it instead, posses in its fold the mental make-up of the society in its totality. When a riddle is narrated, it does not mean only to surprise an individual but through the riddle, a society and a linguistic community aims at examining and exploring the intellectual level and collective mental alertness. It has been observed that sometimes a riddle carries in its fold the secrets of invisible historical past.

Besides, the written conventional sources and archaeological remnants, in the recent past, a commendable initiative was made by the historians, who have been greatly influenced by the modern historiographical schools, to make use of oral traditions as a source of history writing. The special nature of oral traditions derives from the fact that they are unwritten sources couched in a form suitable for oral transmission, and their preservation depends on the power of memory of successive generations of human beings. We see that not only in those nooks and corners of the world inhabited by people without penning down their tradition, oral traditions forms the main available source for a reconstruction of the past, but even among people who have strong and very rich written tradition, many historical sources, including the most ancient ones, are based on oral tradition. Thus, according to Jan Vincina, a claim for the practical utility of research on the specific characteristics of oral tradition, and on the methods of examining its trustworthiness, is doubly substantiated.

To cap it all, a social scientist Hellowell, while commenting on historical relevance of oral tradition writes:

“I have no reservation in acknowledging that a huge mass of invaluable source material that would help historian in redefining the history of people is still undiscovered and waiting eagerly serious scholarship that would aim at interacting with this rich primary source of history”³⁶.

Guided by the trends of new historical schools, which demand for wider and varied themes for historical analysis, subsequent search for new sources led historians all over the world to venture into fresh dominions of investigation and inquiry. In Kashmir, which has a rich and unparalleled oral tradition and oral literature the modern strategies and trends of oral historians are yet to pave their way as a result of which this treasure of knowledge and wisdom remains still confined to popular culture only. In view of modern historiographical trends, the researchers attempt to study the rich treasure of Kashmiri folklore from the stand point of history. No doubt, the scholastic initiative in this field was taken long

back by European scholarship, particularly, Christian missionaries but their work did not go well beyond the border of collection, leaving analytical part to great extent unattended. The urgency to study oral tradition as a source for understanding the life and the character of Kashmir's has been felt with increasing desire, first by European missionaries. The notable among those who did a pioneering work, include among others, J. H. Knowles³⁷, G. A. Grierson³⁸, and Aurel Stein³⁹. These scholars with missionary zeal approached professional story tellers and collected good number of Kashmir folk-tales and proverbs⁴⁰. J. H. Knowles was the first missionary scholar who brought out a comprehensive collection of Kashmir folk tales under the title of Folk Tales of Kashmir⁴¹. The same author penned down another book of great literary merit and value under the title of A Dictionary of Kashmiri Proverbs and Sayings⁴². Though the work suffers many from many limitations, but on the whole, its merit from the stand point of socio-literary history, hardly gets minimized. These collections on the one hand facilitated the job of English administrative officials and other related categories to help in understanding the historical psyche and the character of the people, and on the other hand, it opened a new area to study for scholars to venture in. Being the more remote and inaccessible the region, Kashmir has purer and firmer traditions that call for all inclusive approach of historical appreciation especially the use of oral history and popular culture. The old traditions and rites are disappearing so we should hurry up and collect them as far as we can. For the next century and more collectors would be motivated by this premise. Nevertheless, oral history has now achieved its own professional association and its own practitioners and caretakers among historians, archivists, and curators⁴³.

Besides this, Kashmir has an inexhaustible fund of folk-tales – the popular component of the “literature of the people”, as folklore has been aptly characterized⁴⁴. Culturally advanced as Kashmir was, her contribution to the folk tales treasured in Buddhist Jatakas and the latter classic didactic collections of Panchtantra and Katha Saritsagar are assured⁴⁵. According to Max Muller, “*Mythology and folk tales is vestigial relic of an allegorical religious literature*

connected with the worship of natural phenomena". The proverbs form the most important aspect of Kashmiri folklore. Kashmir has a rich stock of her proverbs. These are an epitome of the experience of its people in the different spheres of the life social, political, philosophical and the indelible impress it has left upon their souls. Almost every proverb has a story or a healthy anecdote behind it, which makes it possible to appreciate the genius and the art of the Kashmiris while, the political composure and economic ease of the ancient past lead their spiritual flights into realms unimaginable⁴⁶. The study of Kashmiri proverbs and sayings brings into focus the marked social conflicts, which has a great role in shaping the society, for example:

Yas wat rawih tas hawan dah;

*Yas kath rawih tas hawih nah kanh*⁴⁷.

Him, who loses his way ten men will direct him;

But he who losses a word, who will direct him?

*Dazanas dod*⁴⁸.

There is pain from a burn.

To lose anything is not pleasant.

*Daryawik malkh ganzrani*⁴⁹.

To count the waves of the river.

These sayings not only reveal the group behavioural patterns of Kashmiri society, they at the same time depict the tensions and conflicts of the collective Kashmiri mind, which could be the outcome of a variety of forces which had coloured the inward canvas of Kashmiri social life.

The study of folklore and folk-literature increases our powers of psychological insight which is considered to be a pre-requisite for the investigator who intend to unveil the different shades of collective human behavior. Since literature portrays human beings in action, it therefore, represents the truth of the movement with an artistic touch of imagination. Kashmir has a unique distinction of having a long tradition of historical records,

Kalhana's Rajatarangini being the sole history in Sanskrit literature. But these records follow the usual mode of presenting a list of kings, queens, and their ministers or an account of their expeditions to neighbouring principalities. There is hardly any mention of the people who inhabit the land. But in recent years the study of history has undergone a sea change. A book written on old pattern which would barely mention Asoka the Great or Lalitaditya and his ephemeral empire would be as incomplete as those which ignore the social setting of political and intellectual history. It equips the researcher with the tool of memory that in turn helps in producing otherwise unreachable insights into the living processes of historical memory whether individual or social. The information derived from oral sources like folklore gets more authenticity and becomes historically valid when it is validated by more respectable evidence. The sensible souls, in the field of historical scholarship, have been conscious of the relevance and the utility of folklore as a source of history. This awareness regarding the richness of the oral sources promoted them to keep in sight the oral literature, along with the other historical material. Even the celebrated writer of the Rajatarangini, Kalhana, has taken enough support from the folklore current during his time. Commenting on the keen historical sense of Kalhana, Stein wrote:

*"It cannot be doubted that Kalhana had taken many of the legends and anecdotes so frequent in the earlier portion of his narrative, direct from the traditional lore current in his own time and not from the early writers. This is proved in numerous cases by the clearly local character of the accounts reproduced or the manner of their relation ... they enable us often to trace the earlier forms of local traditions still extant in Kashmir, and always furnish interesting details bearing on the ancient topography or folklore of the valley"*⁵⁰.

In sharp contrast to Kalhana's historical modality, the other chroniclers who after him continued his historical work adopted intriguing silence towards some of the celebrated historical personalities of their time. It was the service

rendered by the creators of Kashmiri folk-literature, who documented the commendable work of these forgotten personalities in their folk expressions and thereby left behind the unvarnished imprint of their contribution on the slates of the human chest. In this way, Kashmir history must incorporate the discipline of folklore for cementing the broken links of our rich historical heritage.

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CHAPTER-II



HISTORY AS REVEALED BY PLACE NAMES

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HISTORY AS REVEALED BY PLACE NAMES

“Like the strata of a geologic fossil record”, says Richard Eaton, “Place names covering the surface of a map silently testify to past historical processes”.

– Richard M. Eaton¹

All the creatures in this world have a language or a medium for communicating their thoughts and feelings to each other. The cries and sounds of birds and animals are understood by their fellow-beings. A horse's neigh, cow's low, cat's mew, lion's roar or a jackal's howl are intelligible to other members of their species. In the earliest period of his development man used a symbolic language and with the help of signs and gestures communicated his thoughts and feelings to other beings of his own species². Accordingly with the gradual development of medium of expression man began to identify things around him, identify different places by different names, and expressed his thoughts and feelings by means of his tongue. Max Muller, a renowned orientalist writes, *“Language is nothing but a contrivance devised by human skill for the most expeditious communication of thoughts and who would wish to see it treated, not as a production of nature but simply a work of human art”*³. Language is the ‘species-specific’ and ‘species-uniform’ possession of man. Without language human civilization would have remained impossibility. Language is ubiquitous. Besides being a means of communication, language is a store house of knowledge. Language is a socio-cultural-geographical phenomenon. There is deep relation between language and society. It is in society that man acquires and uses language. Manu Metekingi aptly puts it, *“As long as we have the language, we have the culture. As long as we have the culture, we can hold on to the land”*⁴.

In any linguistic analysis a sharp distinction has got to be maintained between speech and writing, because written communication is distinct from the spoken one in spite of the fact that the relationships between speech and writing

are close and intimate. Though the term language in linguistic context is reserved exclusively for spoken language, and speech is the linguist's primary concern, he is interested in writing for some special reason. The written records survive longer than the spoken forms. **Verba volant, scripta manent**, "*the spoken word flies away, the written word remains*", says the Latin proverb⁵. So written information with regard to the historical background of the place names of villages and towns of Kashmir is relatively permanent, whereas the knowledge preserved in the memory of people, most of them are now in advanced years, about the background of the place names is quite transient. It is by means of writing that language is made capable of transcending the ordinary condition of time and space⁶. The written form of a language changes more slowly than the spoken form. Moreover, the written form is often more homogeneous than the spoken. And then writing is more grammatical, in the sense that it often indicates grammatical relationship more clearly, and the writer is generally more careful about grammar than the speaker. Therefore, it is important to document the place names which are like non-renewable resource, if we do not collect them now we will lose them forever.

The gradual identification of places – villages, towns, cities etc. by man gave birth to what we call as names of these places. Thus the continuous and repeated use of a word or word group for individualizing a certain place became its name in the society. A place name may, therefore, roughly be defined as a word or a small group of words indicating a particular place in the entirety. Place names are, therefore, the words used to identify and distinguish places. Accordingly, the place name is a medium of direct contact between a place and the society as it distinguishes a place from others of the same society on the one hand and the places outside a particular society on the other hand. Place name is a powerful instrument of convenience invented by man. It does not work only in a civilized society but people right from the emergence on the earth started to identify different places by different names too. Place names reflect the socio-religious as well as linguistic traditions of a particular region. Place names in Europe, Africa and other non-Indian areas are remarkably different from the names commonly found in Kashmir. Names do not differ in appearance and

meaning only but in their syntax and usage also. Place names are usually drawn from some older language for example, from Sanskrit, Latin, Greek Hebrew, etc. Sources of place names in Kashmir have been diverse and varied. But Sanskrit language and literature have served as an inexhaustible treasury of place names for almost all Kashmiri place names.

Linguistic studies in many parts of the world have shown that names in fact carry a wealth of sociological information, and reveal much more than are visible on the surface. With our rich linguistic and cultural heritage, a study of Indian names can be a most rewarding exercise⁷. Very little attention of Indologists and historians has gone to the study of names of ancient India. This obscure zone of Indology holds a fruitful promise for a dedicated and zealous investigator. Naming, though a linguistic exercise, was predominated by religious sentiments in ancient India. Hindu law givers and other sacred texts have discussed the sacrament of Name giving in all its detail.

The study of place names, in the recent past, has assumed considerable significance in the domain of historical literature⁸. Besides, identifying the contours of local or regional history, place names help historian in understanding the people's response towards the public constructive measures and developmental activities undertaken at a particular period of historical evolution. The place names not only assist researcher in drawing the physical boundaries but they offer penetrating insights into the civic and social profile of the area too. For socio-economic mapping no other evidence can prove more fruitful than the study of place names and this kind of evidence exclusively belongs to the domain of oral tradition.

Place names which are a part and parcel of culture are also a part of language. Culture and place names cannot be separated. We can say that culture without place names is incomplete. Above all, place names are frequently accepted into the language of a new population. Place names, are treasure houses of information regarding our socio-cultural history, in the era where the historical importance of place names has been endorsed beyond doubt. In the light of modern historiographical trends the importance of place names is very

important for the students of all disciplines of social sciences in general and for the history students in particular.

In context of Kashmir, place names assume extra historical significance as they provide enough information about wide variety of religious, commercial, political and cultural shades of Kashmiri life. The graded and contrasting shades that we come across while studying the place names in Kashmir give penetrating clues regarding various stages of Kashmir history. A sensitive researcher interested in socio-cultural mapping of the Valley is sure to get penetrating insights into the linguistic affiliations, commercial landscape, civic sensibilities, trade connectivity, religious personality and public response to governing ethics, with the help of place names.

In Kashmir place names show, among other things, some major themes of the Valley's religious history. They reflect the changing religious faiths of Kashmiris, the strong presence of Naga cult and Buddhism at a certain stage of its history and the dominance of Brahmanic religion on the eve of Islam, the existence of different religious cults among the Hindus, social segregation on the basis of ethnicity, caste and professional basis, localization and even sub-localization of the sacred *tirthas*, linkages between land endowments, agrarian expansion and religious changes, influx of foreign cultures and their impact on Kashmir, accommodation and adjustment policy followed by Islamic movement and at the last they also conform that Islam entered Kashmir as a civilization building religion.

Although the archaeological and literary sources testify to the changing religious history of Kashmir, the place names not only corroborate it but also provide an enduring evidence of its intensity. The fact that Naga worship was a popular belief of ancient Kashmir has been kept more than alive by the name with which the springs are called in Kashmir. Since it was a popular belief that the sources of water particularly of the springs, are the abodes of tutelary deities who manifest themselves in the form of snakes, the springs in Kashmir came to be called by the generic term *Nag*, meaning serpent in Sanskrit⁹. And eventually the fish of the springs became *halal* (permissible) to see but *haram* (forbidden)

to eat – the notion, which is held by the Kashmiris, all and sundry regardless of religious affiliations, down to our own times. While all the springs were considered abodes of tutelary deities, some big springs were considered to be protected by some Nagas occupying high position in the hierarchy of Naga Pantheon¹⁰. This is corroborated by the continuity of the names with which some springs of Kashmir come down to the present times, for example, *Nila Nag*, *Sesh Nag*, *Veeri Nag*, *Konsar Nag*, *Vechar Nag*, *Sukh Nag*, *Susram Nag* etc.

The prevalence of Buddhism in Kashmir for a long period of time is an established fact. The place names, however, indicate the institutional foundations of its mass basis. That the Buddhists established a network of *sangramas* (monasteries), *viharas* and *bhavanas* not only in the capital city but their impact on the Valley can be traced to the present day in the designation of villages and city quarters as they left their names to the sites at which they were erected.

Thus there are many villages in Kashmir known as *Sangram*. And all those villages and *Muhallas* which have the suffix *vihara* or *bhavana*, formed the centers of Buddhism¹¹. It may be mentioned that there is a considerable number of villages and *Muhallas* whose names have the suffix *vor*. Whether *vor* is the Kashmirized version of *vihara* or *isvara* is an open question¹². Also the names of a number of villages and *Muhallas* continue to have *bhavan* as their suffix. For example, *Avantabhavan*, *Khandabhavan* etc. This is besides the hard fact that there is a famous town known as *Mattan*, located near Anantnag.

While the Naga cult and Buddhism remained successively the main faiths of Kashmir before the sixth century A. D. the Saiva and Viasnava Brahmanism dominated the religious scene of Kashmir thence forward until Islam had earned mass conversion. The predominance of Brahmanism in Kashmir on the eve of the arrival of Islam is shown most probably more tangibly by the place names. The majority of the villages and *Muhallas* are either named after the Saiva and Vaisnava rulers of Kashmir or after a Hindu god or goddess or their incarnations or the Brahmanic religious institutions. Of the first category of villages and towns mention may be made of Bimyun (perhaps Abhimanyupura founded by Abhimanyu I),¹³ Achval (Aksavala founded by Aksa),¹⁴ Avantipura (built by

Avantivarman),¹⁵ Chakur (Cakrapura founded by Cakramardika, the wife of King Lalitaditya),¹⁶ Chandargam (Chandragrama), Gudar (village founded by Godhara),¹⁷ Gopkar (named after Gopa agraharas established by Gopaditya),¹⁸ Kalampora (Kalyanapura founded by Kalyanadevi),¹⁹ Letapur (Lilatapura founded by Lalitaditya),²⁰ Pampar(Padmapura founded by Padma),²¹ Tapar (Prathapapura founded by Prathapaditya),²² Ratanpur (founded by Ratnadevi),²³ Simpor (Simhapura founded by Jayasimha),²⁴ Sopur (Suyyapur founded by Suyya),²⁵ Hurpor (Suarapura founded by Sura),²⁶ Vijbor (Vijayesvara founded by Vijaya),²⁷ etc. A large number of villages, towns, mountains and rivers of Kashmir are known either after the deities of the Brahmanic pantheon or their incarnations or the Brahmanic religious institutions or the Brahmanic sacred sites. For instance, Siva, Hari, Divar, Guripor, Varahamulla, Gopalpor, Ganeshbal, Indar, Mitargom (Skt. Matragrama), Martand (Skt. Martanda, the Sun god), Buchvor (Skt. Bhutesvara), Shankarpor, Ganpatyar, Jogi Lankar, Jogipor, Maysum (Maksikasvamin), Didmar (Diddamatha), etc; in case of the names of villages and quarters; Veth (Vitasta), Sindh (Sindhu), Ganga, Badrihal, etc; with regard to rivers; Harmukta (Siva's diadem), Hariparbat (Haraparvat), Mahadev, Pancaladeva, etc; regarding the names of mountains and hills.

This is not, however, all. The villages of Kashmir with suffix 'bal' were actually famous or main centers of Hebrew people in Kashmir, for example Nadibal, Gangabal, Ganeshbal, Ganderbal, Sumbal etc. The term 'bal' is a Hebrew word which means settlement²⁸. All those villages of Kashmir whose names have the suffix of isa, isvara, swamin, mar (Skt. matha), hom (Skt. asrama), ham (Skt. sala) and vor (Skt. vata) were important centers of Brahmanic religion²⁹. The domination of Brahmanism is also clear from the fact that even to the present day the local nomenclature of Kashmir whether in the Valley or in the mountains shows throughout an unmistakably Sanskrit character. This is most clearly illustrated by the constant recurrence of such terms as – pur or por (pura), gam or gom (grama) besides ham, hom or vor in village names; of sar (saras), nambal (nadvala), nag (naga) in names of lakes, marshes etc; of van (vana), nar (nada), marg (mathika), gul (galika), brar

(bhattarika), vath (patha), in designation of alpine localities, peaks, passes etc; kul (kulya), khan (khani) in names of streams and canals³⁰.

The place names also substantiate the written evidence regarding the presence of myriad cults in Brahmanism. We have discussed that the different villages, towns and quarters are named after different cultic gods and goddesses or their incarnations. The place names also make it clear that the people of different lineages, castes and professions either lived in separate villages or in separate quarters. Therefore we have the villages named either after a particular lineage group or a special caste. For example, Awanpor (Yavanapura, the place of Yavanas, Greeks), Bhuttapor (the habitation of Bhuttas), Dardakot (the habitation of Dards), Malikpor (the habitation of Maliks), Vangom (the village of Wanis), Bhuttakadal (the bridge named after the locality of Bhuttas which with the passage of time became the name of the place), Magreypor (the village of Magrays, the name of a tribe), Warpor (the locality of Wars, the name of a tribe), Mlecchmar (the habitation of mlecchas – non-Brahmanas, outsiders especially used for Muslims by our Sanskrit sources), Wattal Kadal (the bridge named after the locality of scavengers), Naidyar (the place of barbers), etc. And what is invariably seen down to our recent past is that not only were the lower castes living in separate quarters but the different lineage groups also lived in separate muhallas, each known after the *Kram* of the group as Loanpor, Mirpor, Ganiepor, Pirpor, Shaterpor, Barpor etc.

Geographical constraints & the technological poverty led to the creation of alternative sacred places in Kashmir to substitute the main ones for performing religious rituals. Place names provide valuable information in this regard. For example, when we visit different nooks of the Valley we find many places known as Gangabal besides the main Gangabal, a sacred lake on Harmukta, created by the Kashmiri Brahmans as substitutes for Ganga. No less important a fact revealed by the place names is strong linkage between land endowments, agrarian settlements, religious institutions and ideological change. Most of the village quarters & towns carry a name which is an abbreviated composition of the persons and the sacred building or which is known after a

cultic god/goddess or their incarnations. Different rulers, ministers and other notables founded these places. An important feature of the new foundations was the construction of a temple/Matha and the settlement of Brahmans who were endowed with rent-free land grants known as *agraharas*³¹. Therefore, the more we come across the places named after the rulers and nobles and the settlements having a religious nomenclature, the more they show the dominance of Brahmans and Brahmanism.

It is remarkable to note that the nomenclature of Kashmir, whether in the Valley or in the mountains, remained intact even after the Muslims occupied Kashmir and Islam become its mass religion. This assumes considerable significance if we bear in mind that this nomenclature had direct linkages with the pre-Islamic religion and culture of Kashmir. For example there are still a considerable number of villages named as Shiva, Shankarpura, Gopalpura, Indr, Shangarpura, Ganeshbal and the like. This makes at least one thing clear that the Islamization was a gradual process; It did not embark on the policy of a total antagonism with the local culture of Hindus; some cultural traits of the past, which were not considered a serious challenge to Islamization process were tolerated; and among these remains place names figured prominently. Indeed, comparing the long rule of the sultans and the far reaching changes with which period is characterized; the place names with Islamic nomenclature are very scarce. And of the available few places designated after the Sultans, saints and the Islamic institutions a majority are found in Srinagar city³², showing that the Sultans and the saints focused mainly on the capital city for its intensive culture change.

However, place names constitute major living evidence showing that Islam entered Kashmir not merely with a set of beliefs, values and rituals but came as a full-fledged civilization – a civilization with a far advanced technology and culture of the time. This is patently borne out by the toponymics of the capital city of Kashmir – Srinagar. The present Srinagar is not only a conglomeration of different capitals – Rinchanpur, Ala al-Dinpur, Qutub al-Dinpur, Shihbab al-Dinpur, Sikandarpur and Nowshahr – built by the Sultans³³,

But is also an agglomeration of different technologically specialized quarters which came into being during the Sultans owing to the large scale influx of specialists from different parts of the Muslim world and their settlement in the capital city under the nourishing care of the Sultans.

To cap it all, the armchair historian sitting in the library scanning the contemporary sources alone, can never come to grips with the different dimensions of society in Kashmir during the most formative phase of its history- the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries. In order to achieve a true picture it is necessary to extend ones sources to the widest range of written and unwritten sources. Alongside the contemporary sources it is crucially important to tap the oral sources which have a deep bearing on Kashmir. What is more important in the words of Marc Bloch, “*One must first look at the present’ or what was recently present in order to understand the past*”³⁴. It makes imperative for the historian to study the records beyond his period of study, immerse himself in local culture, have at his command the whole battery of qualities of a participant observer, tramp the whole Valley, keenly observe the survivals of the past, talk with the local people, listen to and observe oral and practical translations of human moods, beliefs, convictions, values and moral judgments and to enter into dialogue with one’s surroundings.

Etymology of Pulwama (Wajah Tasmea)

Broadly speaking, there are two folk beliefs about the historical background of the place name of Pulwama. One version is that in earlier times the area was surrounded by flood channels (*Arahs*) and most of the springs (*Nags*) were falling in the area. It is said that water was coming out by just removing any big stone (*Pal*). On this basis it got the name as “*Pulwone*”, which with the passage of time got transformed into *Pulwom* or Pulwama. This folk version is supported by the fact that even at present time most of the water bodies and springs are falling in the vicinity of town Pulwama. The reality seldom used to hide in myths. As it is already mentioned that most of the springs and water bodies fall in the vicinity of town Pulwama, so there does not seem to be any dearth of water supply, and people have woven this reality in a myth

called *Danj-i-Tal-Dand* (dike under dike). Another folk version about the place name of Pulwama is that it got this name because of the presence of a number of bridges (*Pul*) in the town. This version is supported by the fact that all the surrounding villages are connected with the town by means of bridges. Although, both the folk versions seem to be correct but we should not forget the fact that building of bridges is quite a later development. Therefore the first folk version with regard to the background of place name of Pulwama seems to be more appropriate.

According to the revenue records the original name of Pulwama was *Panwangam* which comprised four hamlets namely *Malikpora*, *Dangerpora*, *Chatpora* and *Dalipora*. Initially it was a tehsil headquarter. In order to “Knit together” all the four hamlets in the shape of a town, it was formed into a village. To “Knit together” has been described as *Panwangam* (*Gam* is word for all Kashmiri villages) which later on reshaped and become *Pulgam* and Pulwama, which is at the tip of tongue of the people. The area under debate (Pulwama) is dotted with quite a good number of archaeological structures ranging from royal palaces to religious places. The Awantipora archaeological site and the remains of ancient Hindu temples at village Payer Pulwama are of marked historical significance³⁵. Before concluding the origin of the place name of Pulwama it is noteworthy to mention a Kashmiri saying, the saying is attributed to Sheikh-ul-Alam^{RA}, commented the people of Pulwama:

Pulwamic veti madher, dil-e-aam.

(People of Pulwama are overtly friendly in nature but are covertly callous).

Tehsil wise number of villages and area³⁶

S. No.	Tehsil	Reporting Area (000'Hectares)	Number of villages (2001 Census)		
			Inhabited	Uninhabited	Total
01	Pulwama	38	208	06	214
02	Pampore	13	25	02	27
03	Tral	16	80	-	80
04	Awantipora	-	-	-	-
Total		67	313	08	321

Here is provided the list of the place names of some major villages falling under tehsil Pulwama as a sample study. The study is based on conventional and non- conventional evidences gathered through the established tools of historical inquiry coupled with oral evidences.

Village Kangan

The village Kangan is a small village inhabited by about two hundred and thirty families and is situated just two km's from district headquarters of Pulwama and lies in the south-west of district Pulwama. There are five folk versions about the historical background of the place name of the village. One is that there were eleven *nags* (springs) in the village which is reminiscent of the two facts of the village's past – one religious and another pertaining to physical geography. Since *Nag* represented a tutelary deity according to the pre-Islamic popular folk belief, the folk belief that the village possessed eleven *Nags*, represents the distinctive religious importance of Kangan and the deep seated belief in *Nags* during the pre-Islamic Kashmir, preserved by the folk in its store house of knowledge though the place name do not make a mention of *Nag*. But as per the folk belief³⁷ in earlier times the place was known by the name of “*Kahnag*” and with the passage of time the place name got reshaped into the present day name of Kangan. This folk version is substantiated by the fact that

even today there is a good number of *Nags* in the village viz., *Kani-Nag*, *Nuni-Nag*, *Chanven-Nag*, *Kunan-Nag*, *Mangiham-Nag*, *Wuweth-Nag*, *Yadwedth-Nag*, *Crovkheh-Nag*, *Chakageker-Nag*, *Mangi-Nag* etc.

The second folk version is that the village is called Kangan because there is a big *Nag* known by the name of *Kani-Nag*³⁸, *Kani-Nag*, an age old *Nag* in the village and as a reliable source of irrigation in village Kangan. According to the folklore the *Nag* is called *Kani-Nag* because it is one among those nags whose water level never recedes even during the period of drought (*Khasheksalie*)³⁹. This folk version seems to be more authentic because the revenue record of the village substantiates this folk version about the historical background of the place name of the village.

According to the third version, the village is called Kangan because in earlier times there were carpenters (*Chan*) in the village who were well-versed and skillful in making combs (*Kangie*)⁴⁰. According to this folk belief the village was initially known by the name of '*Kangie*' and with the passage of time it got changed into the name of Kangan⁴¹. This folk version holds less ground as compared to the first two versions. For this, there are many reasons and one important reason is that even today there is no well trained carpenter in the village. There is yet another version according to which it was Lawrence who named the village. It is beyond doubt that Lawrence came to Kashmir in 1880's and the villagers of Kangan claim that he had stayed here for one night. If it is correct that the village has been named by Lawrence then there arises a question that before Lawrence what was the name of village⁴²? The fifth and the last folk belief is that the village has been named after Hindu god Kanga. Although Muslims of the village denies the belief but yet Hindu inhabitants of surrounding villages have a firm belief in this version.

As the researcher mentioned the folk versions about the historical background of the place name of village Kangan but we should not rely wholly on folklore and we must find the actual facts about the place name. The folklore is not devoid of historical significance. First it points to a historical fact that the village was a stronghold of Hinduism prior to its conversion to Islam. This is

substantiated by the archaeological remains as well as some of the place names which have continued down to our times in the original form, second, it refers to the pre-eminent role played by Amir-i-Kabir Mir Syed Ali Hamadani^{RA}, a great *Sufi*, in converting the people of Kashmir to Islam. However, there is no recorded evidence that the *Sufi* ever visited the village. It is said that while Amir-i-Kabir Mir Syed Ali Hamdani^{RA} was visiting from nearby village Monghama towards Kangan, in the midway his horse felt thirst and the horse rubbed with its foot and there emerged water in the form of a spring. The spring still survives and is known by the name of 'Mangi-Nag'.

There is a famous folk saying⁴³ with regard to the nature of the people of village Kangan. The folk saying is as follows:

*Kane Kangan, Thane Dadoor, Sheri Shangarpur, Shangerpurikev
Shangar Kenaiv Haie Samavwar, Verie Punais Kheva Keriv
Chevie Wazadar.*

(Kangan of stones, Dadoora of butter, lions of Shangarpura, people of Shangarpura sell Shangar and buy Samawar, make tea of willow leaves and drink proudly).

However, with regard to the nasty nature of the people of village Kangan, here it is noteworthy to mention another famous folk saying. The folk saying is as follows⁴⁴:

Vone walize, Vethi tereize, Kangani vazum deezenizai.

(Bring from forest, throw into Veth but never give credit in Kangan).

Village Puchal

The history behind the place name of village Puchal is connected with a *Sufi* saint known by the name of Mir Mirak Andrabi^{RA45}. Mir Mirak Andrabi^{RA} was actually a resident of Malaratta Srinagar. He had three sons – Syed Mohammad Andrabi, buried at Malaratta, was his eldest son; Syed Qasim Ahmad Andrabi, who is buried in village Puchal, was his second son; and Syed Mohammad Yousuf Andrabi was his third son, buried in Drugjan Srinagar.

According to the folklore⁴⁶ one day Syed Qasim Ahmad Andrabi, who was working as a military commander, was called by the ruler of the time because of some robbery incident that had taken place in the city. On the way to city Syed Qasim accidentally met his father Mir Mirak Andrabi^{RA}, who advised his son to always deal with kind heart with common people. It is said that Qasim was not influenced by the advice and did not pay any attention to his father. Further, it is said that his father looked at him for a moment and both the arms of the Qasim were paralyzed. After the intervention of a relative of Qasim, he was freed from this situation and this event brought a complete turn in the life of Qasim. Now Qasim left his government service and migrated from Malaratta to Awantipora, where he spent ten years of his age on a hill at *Barsoo* for deep meditation. It is said that after a period of ten years, in 1577 A. D., he came down from the hill in a flood situation and there was only one boat man available at that time. The boat man refused to take him to the other side because he (Qasim) had no money to pay the boat man for the service. According to the folk belief he ordered a big stone to take him to the adjacent area namely (Pazhil) Puchal. The stone floated on water and the great Syed reached the offshore. The stone is still present in the village of Puchal. After reaching Puchal, he went in a house, in search of fire, there was only a blind girl in the house, and after taking a little bit of fire from the house, the great Syed bestowed /gifted her with the eyesight.

According to folk belief when Qasim Ahmad Andrabi came down from the hill after ten years of deep meditation, he invited his father, Mir Mirak Andrabi, who accepted the invitation of his son and went on the invitation along with some of his disciples. Mirak Andrabi asked his disciples to demand feast as per their tastes. On the other side Qasim Ahmad Andrabi served the guests (his father and all of his disciples) as per their own tastes. On this festive occasion, Mirak Andrabi told that “Pazhil” was good, the word Pazhil means to respect and to serve the guests. As such the place came to be known as Pazhil and with the passing of time it got reshaped into the present day name of Puchal.

The revenue record of the village substantiates the folk version about the origin and historical background of the place name of the village because the revenue record of the village narrates the same story.

Village Putrigam

The village Putrigam is a small village inhabited by about two hundred families and is about six kilometers away from headquarter of district Pulwama. Having the central position among the different villages, no *pacca* road passes through the village and vehicle traffic is almost absent. However, the village is accessible from *Pulwama-Ramu* road as well as from *Pulwama-Shadimarg* road. Locally the village is known as “Pahalagom”. All population is of Muslims which is about 200 at present; a few families of Hindus which were inhabitants of the village have migrated during 1950’s from the village. The village falls in the category of plain land which is beneficial for the people of the village because all land is suitable for agricultural purposes. As we know that Kashmir has been mostly dependent on agriculture, same was the case with village Putrigam, agriculture was the main source of income in the village in medieval times and early modern days. Presently the agricultural land has been converted into horticultural land having apple orchards mainly. There are two *Zayarats* in the village upon which the villagers have firm belief, one is known as Zee Bab Saeb^{RA} and second is of Sultan Saeb^{RA}.

As the village is locally known as Pahalgom but in revenue and other records the village has been named as Putrigam. Broadly speaking, there are two folk versions regarding the background of the place name of the village.

The shepherds of Kashmir known as *Chaupans* or *pohl*, and though there is nothing in their physiognomy to distinguish them from the peasants of the valley, they form a separate class, intermarrying sometimes with the *Galwans*⁴⁷. About the historical background of place name “*Phalgoom*”, it is said that the original dwellers of the village were *Chaupans* (*Waggi*) who in earlier times used to rear sheep and cattle in abundance. So it got its name from it as in

Kashmir "*Pohl*" is the person who keeps sheep and cattle. From the *Kram* composition of the village it becomes vividly clear that *Waggi* were the early settlers of the village because *Waggi* constitute more than forty percent of the present population. The *Chaupans* and the *Shirgujri* or milk-sellers often bear the *Kram* name *Waggi*⁴⁸.

Regarding the place name *Putrigam*, it is said that the village got its name from the big canal "*Putrin*" which irrigates the fields of the whole village. The Kashmiri word *Putrin* means equal sharer. As when the canal was constructed from the *Romesh Ara*, a nearby rivulet, half of the water was taken by this canal from the *Ara*. It is stated also in revenue records that this canal *Putrin* was constructed mainly for the irrigation purposes of the village and even today the entire agricultural land of the village wholly and solely depends on the canal.

Village Tengtuna

The legend goes that once giants (*pandae*) passed through the village and one among them cleaned his *pulhour* (straw shoes) near village which formed a small hill which was later on used for burial practices by the people and it (hill) came to be known as *teng*. Thus the village which surrounds the *teng* came to be known by the name of *Tengtuna*⁴⁹. Literally *Tengtuna* has been derived from two Sanskrit words: "*Teng*" means a small hill and "*Poanie*" which means water. The legend says that there used to flow a spring (*Nag*) on the top of the hill (*teng*)⁵⁰ but after some time a Kashmiri Brahman brought it down and placed it in the middle of the village, where Hindus were praying to their water god.

At present there is no Hindu family residing in the village. According to the people of the village, the last Hindu family which migrated to Jammu was of Chaman Lal Bhat S/o Sans Lal Bhat and he migrated from the village in 2008.

The roots of the place name of village *Tengtuna* lies in the legacy of the Geological past of Kashmir and the changes it underwent leading to the emergence of the present physical formation of Kashmir. As it is now proved beyond doubt by geological scientists that Kashmir was a big water body (lake

for millions of years) and it was during this period that Karewas (*wudars*) and small hills came into existence. When water started to flow out from Kashmir, Karewas were the first to emerge or came out from water. Likewise as a result of sedimentation this hill (*teng*) was formed and when people settled in the environs of the hill, they named the village by the name of Tengpuna. The Hindus of the village used to cremate their dead on the hill and they also had built a temple on the top of it. There was also a spring (*Nag*) where they used to worship water god. The spring (*Nag*) still survives but it is now present at the middle of the village and is known by the name of *Raztal-Nag*.

As per another folk belief after the conversion to Islam about 2/3rd of the hill was occupied by Muslims, and they started to bury their dead in it and was called *teng* meaning graveyard. As we know that water in Sanskrit is known as “*poanie*” which flowed from the top of the *teng*, from a big spring, that is why the village came to be known as Tengpoan and with the passage of time it came to be known as Tengpuna. The *teng* is situated in south-west of the village and is about one hundred feet in height and occupies about twenty four *kanals* of land. There is a *Chinar Bagh* in the front on the foot of the *teng* on the main Pulwama-Koil road, which really adds to the beauty and charm of the village.

Village Muchpuna

Village Muchpuna is situated about forty two km's to the south of Srinagar and about four km's from Pulwama headquarter on main *Pulwama-Payar* road. When we observe very keenly the origin of the village, we find that there is no solid evidence or reference with regard to the origin and etymology (*Wajah Tasmaa*) of the village.

With regard to background of the place name of the village, broadly speaking there are two folk versions. One folk version is that the word Muchpuna has been derived from two Sanskrit words – “*Mush*” and “*Puna*”. While the former means fish, the later means merit. In the village there are number of springs, in which there are still lot of fish.

Of the most primitive forms of worship that survived in Kashmir in spite of great religious changes is the Naga worship. *Nagas* are designated in Kashmir as the tutelary deities supposed to reside in the springs and lakes of the Valley. In the past times, fish were present in abundance in springs. Fish of springs, as at present time, were considered sacred. That the Kashmiri Muslims consider the fish of a spring *haram* (forbidden) and do not kill or eat them is considerably the legacy of deep-rooted Naga cult⁵¹. It is in the back drop of this historical truth the first folk version with regard to place name of the village can be ascertained beyond doubt.

The second folk version with regard to the origin of the place name of the village is that the word Muchpuna is combination of two words “*Mush*” and “*Poan*”. While the former means fish, the later means water. Thus from the derivative sense, the word Muchpuna means “*fish in water*”. These two folk versions regarding the place name of Muchpuna are almost identical.

So much crusted was the belief of springs being abodes of spirits with supernatural powers that people could not forget it even after their conversion to Islam. What is, however, of considerable importance for our immediate purpose is that the *Rishis* and even some *Sufis* believed in the sacredness of the springs and held the view that the springs occupying the snakes could assume the form of human beings and snakes. However, they Islamized the belief declaring that the spirits of the springs had been converted to Islam by them⁵². Therefore the *Rishis* and later *Suhrawardis* reinforced the ancient belief of the anthropomorphic attributes of the springs.

Village Gangoo

Village Gangoo is situated about thirty five km's to the south of Srinagar, on main Pampore-Pulwama road. Presently it falls within district and tehsil Pulwama. Along with many other villages, in its neighborhood, it is situated between two karewas. One towards its south east called by the name of *Koil Wudder* and other towards North West of village *Gangoo* known as *Newa*

Wudder. The village almost equally inhabit on the two sides of the main road, which runs from Pulwama to Srinagar. The village is just one and half km's away from the district headquarter.

So far as the place name of the village is concerned, there are three folk versions about it. The first and the most popular folk version is that there was a spring (*Nag*) in *Dangerpora* (Dar Mohalla) of the village, which is still known by the name of "*Gangai*". In the remote times, according to folk belief, people from far flunged areas and from neighbouring villages used to come early in the morning and take holy bath in the spring (*Gangai*). And the village which got inhabited around the spring came to be pronounced as Gangoo from *Gangai*. Though the *Gangai* is still present in the village but now-a-days it is quite in dying situation. This folk version is substantiated by revenue record of the village too.

In Kashmir besides a long history of saint worship, the people also had crusted habit of worshipping sacred shrines called *Asthapanas* or tirthas. With pantheism graven on their minds, the people were always on the alert to seize upon any manifestation of the powers of the nature to endow it with supernatural powers. The result was that Kashmir became a land where according to Kalhana, "*There is not a space as large as a grain of sesamum without a tirtha*"⁵³ to which the people turned for solution of the crisis of their lives. A no less striking feature of the Kashmiri Hindus shrine worship disposition was that they substituted the important Hindu tirthas, located elsewhere in India, by inventing local ones and transferring to them the same appellations and sanctity as carried by the original ones. Thus they identified the *Sindh and Vitasta* with *Prayag*⁵⁴. This substituting tendency did not stop here; it came down to the sub-local levels too, as, for instance, we find numerous *Gangas* spread over in different parts of the Valley⁵⁵. Similarly in village Gangoo, there is a spring still known by the name of *Gangai*, where, according to people of the village up to quite recent times, people used to take bath especially in the months of summer. But at present the spring is in dying situation in spite of the fact that a strong bund has been constructed all around it by government.

Second folk version about the place name of the village is that, in ancient times the village was known as *Shehr-i-Kung*. Raja Tavengeer (who was the ruler of Kashmir in 176 B.C.) founded this *Shehr-i-Kung* (present Gangoo) and built a temple there which was known by the name of Uma Sheri Temple. It is said that the ruler spent a huge amount on the construction of the temple. But unfortunately there is not any written evidence about that *Uma Sheri* Temple. According to folklore, may be the *Kung* was later on pronounced as *Kungoo* or it may be Gangoo.

The third version regarding the place name of the village is that in ancient times when there was very scare population in the Valley as compared to other parts of the world, because of severe cold and presence of water in the Valley in abundance. It is in those days that a deaf person settled in the village. In Urdu language deaf person is known by the name of “*Gaunga*”. As the deaf person along with his family settled in the village, with the passage of time it came to be named as Gangoo.

Village Ramu

A considerable village prettily situated a little from the left bank of the *Ramchu* River, about ten miles north of Shopian district, on the west side of the road to Srinagar. It lies under a low range of hills, from the top of which an extensive view of the Valley may be obtained. The country on the east side of the road is highly cultivated with rice crops. The encamping ground is somewhat confined, but ample space to be found on the *Wudar* beyond which water supplies are procurable.

Cunningham, in his speculations regarding the description of Kashmir remarks that the karewa above Ramu forms a bank about hundred feet in height, in horizontal strata of different kinds⁵⁶. The upper most twenty feet are composed of stiff alluvial soil, the next twenty feet of rolled stones and loose earth and the lower most sixty of indurated blue clay. The last must have been deposited by the lake in its state of quiescence, but the middle stratum could only

have been formed by the first grand rush of water on some sudden burst of the rocky barrier bellow Tattamula, and the uppermost would have been deposited by the subsiding waters as they reached the newly formed level.

Broadly speaking, there are three folk versions with regard to the historical background of the place name of village Ramu. The first folk version is that the village belongs to a medieval period and owes its name to a Sufi saint whose name was Hazrat Romva Rishi^{RA 57}. Hazrat Romva Rishi^{RA} is famous in Kashmir by the name of Roma Rishi^{RA 58}. He was outstanding among *Rishis* of Kashmir. In worship and penance he was remarkable. Hazrat Roma Rishi^{RA} was among the people who were living on the banks of River *Gihoan*, travelled the whole world and went for the Haj pilgrimage⁵⁹ seven times⁶⁰. He came Kashmir and settled in village Ramu. The people of Ramu hold the opinion that the village owes its name to this *Sufi* saint. This folk version is also substantiated by the revenue record of the village.

Another folk version⁶¹ with regard to the background of the place name of village Ramu is that the village has been named after god Roma⁶². As per the non-conventional sources, the village names in Kashmir with the suffix “*Hom*” were actually the Greek settlements because “*Hom*” is the Sanscritised form of “*Lum*”. The lum is a Greek word which means Greek settlement. However, it is also possible that some people from Greece came and settled in Kashmir in ancient times⁶³. The tribe *Mleccha*’s, is assumed to have been Greeks⁶⁴. Even now names of some villages in Kashmir are based on the names of Indo-Greek deities. For example:

Names of villages		Names of deities
Odur	from	Edessa
Sotur	from	Soteria
Midur	from	Modura
Romuh	from	Roma
Solum	from	Sileina

Another folk version is that the village has been named after River *Ramchu*⁶⁵.

Village Hakripora

Village Hakripora is located in the south west of Kashmir. It is about twenty five km's away from the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir that is Srinagar. The village falls within district and tehsil Pulwama. The village is located in between *Wudar* land on its western side and flood channel (*Arah*) in its eastern side, on Pulwama Newa road. Hakripora is associated with the *pargana Cherate*⁶⁶. The village extends over the area of six thousand five hundred and thirty seven *kanals* of land, out of which more than sixty percent is under rice and orchard cultivation, twenty to thirty percent land is under graveyards and other settlements⁶⁷. Hakripora is having a central position, surrounded by a number of villages. On northern side Hakripora is surrounded by *Singo Narbal*, from southern end there is village *Gudora*, from western side there is *Newa* and from eastern side there is village *Hasan Wani*.

The word "Hakripora" is the combination of two words "*Hakri*" and "*Pora*". The etymological meaning of "*Hakri*" is logs and trees uprooted during floods and "*Pora*" means settlement. Thus the name of the village is Hakripora. As heard from ancestors, a flood channel was flowing through the village which was a part of famous *Roomshi Nala*⁶⁸. During floods people of this village used to gather or collect these logs and uprooted trees and dump in the same land, due to which this village was known by the name of Hakripora⁶⁹. The village is also known by the name of Hakdipora. It is quite noteworthy to mention here that revenue record of the village speaks the same story about the historical background of the place name of the village.

Village Mitrigam

Mitrigam is a small village in the *Cherate pargana* which lies about seven km's west of Pulwama district. The village is situated on two sides of

Pulwama Char-i-Sharief road. The village is also the birth place of *Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor*, who is famous by name of *Shar-e-Kashmir*.

As far as the historical background of the place name of village Mitrigam is concerned, there are three broad folk versions. The first folk version is, as the fact remains that Kashmir has been ruled by many ruling dynasties viz., *Muryans, Kushans, Indo-Greeks, Parthians, Mughals, Afghans* etc⁷⁰. When we trace the origin of the place name of the village we find that the village belongs to the period of *Parthians*, which was one of the ruling dynasties of Kashmir.

However, as far as the word Mitrigam is concerned, it is believed that it has evolved from the name “*Mitra*”, who was one of the gods of *Parthians* who practiced Zoroastrianism⁷¹. It is believed that under the rule of *Parthians*, the village might have remained a hub of Zoroastrian activities and the village might have been dedicated to god *Mitra*. The village was later on named after the god *Mitra* as Mitrigam⁷².

The second folk version about the historical background of the place of the village is that the village has been named after the Hindu god “*Matra*”. A large number of villages, towns, quarters, mountains, villages and rivers of Kashmir are known either after the deities of the Brahmanic pantheon or their incarnations or the Brahmanic religious institutions or the Brahmanic sacred sites⁷³. One example is of Mitargom (Skt. Matragrama).

The third folk version is that when Amir-i-Kabir^{RA74} was propagating the message of Islam, he also arrived in village of Mitrigam. He pitched his camp in a field which is now known by the name of “*Derbal*”, which corroborates that Amir-i-Kabir^{RA} has laid his camp (*Dera*) at the place. As is true of other villages, Amir-i-Kabir^{RA} was successful in converting a large number of people from the village and from the adjoining villages. According to folklore, during the process of conversion Shah-i-Hamadan^{RA} was impressed by a *Pandit*, who belonged to the village and later on the *Pandit* became a fast friend (*Mitr*) of Amir-i-Kabir^{RA}. Then after, the village was named as Mitrigam. In the village there is also *Ziarat*⁷⁵ of Amir-i-Kabir^{RA}. Moreover, the revenue record of the village is quite silent about the origin and historical background of the place

name of the village. However, the village is exceedingly famous because of its worthy son of soil Mahjoor.

Peerzada Ghulam Ahmad (September 3, 1885- April 9, 1952), better known by the pen name Mahjoor was a renowned poet of Kashmir Valley, along with contemporaries, Zinda Kaul and Abdul Ahad Azad. He is especially noted for introducing a new style into Kashmiri poetry and for expanding Kashmiri poetry into previously unexplored thematic realms.

Mahjoor was born at village Mitrigam, Pulwama, located approximately 37 km's from the city of Srinagar. Mahjoor followed the academic footsteps of his father, who was a scholar of Persian language. He received the primary education from the *Maktab* of *Aashiq Trali* (a renowned poet) in Tral. After passing the middle school examination from *Nusrat-ul-Islam* School, Srinagar, he went to Punjab where he came in contact with Urdu poets like *Bismil Amritsari* and *Moulana Shibili Nomani*. He returned to Srinagar in 1908 and started writing in Persian and then in Urdu. Determined to write in his native language, Mahjoor used the simple diction of traditional folk storytellers in his writing.

Mahjoor worked as a *patwari* (village revenue clerk) in Kashmir. Along with his official duties, he spent his free time in writing poetry, and his first Kashmiri poem '*Vanta hay vesy*' was published in 1918.

Many themes of the poetry of Mahjoor involved freedom struggle and progress in Kashmir, and his poems awakened latent nationalism among Kashmiris. His popular verses engaged such topics as love, communal harmony, social reform, and the plight of the Kashmiris. He also wrote on such timeless themes as youth, the flowers of Nishat Garden, peasant girls, gardeners, and the golden oriole. At that time, such songs were unknown in formal Kashmiri poetry.

Mahjoor is also recognized as a poet who revolutionized the traditional forms of *nazm* and *ghazal*. Through his verses in Kashmiri, Mahjoor contributed a lot of fire and ignition to the freedom struggle during the autocratic Dogra

regime. His poems gave impetus to the struggle and served as a clarion call to the masses to free their nation from the chains of slavery. He expresses his patriotic fervor in the poem “*Walo Ho Bage-e-Wano*” (Arise, O Gardener) and stresses upon his fellow countrymen to decorate their nation and land with flowers which symbolizing their apt traditions based on honesty, truthfulness and dignity. He says,

*“Wala Ho Bage-wano Nou Baharukh Shan Paida kar
Pholan Gull Gat Karan Bulbul Tetuthi Samane Paida Kar”.*

Come oh Gardener and prepare the Garden for spring
So that the flowers will bloom and nightingales sing in glory.

In other beautiful poem, “*Gulshan Watan Chu Souni*” Mahjoor expresses his love for his nation and breathes out the idea symbolically and that too with sincerity and pride that there is nothing dear to him than his nation and he wishes fervently it to prosper and become a dignified nation. This spirit of Mahjoor was appreciated and liked by Iqbal even and he had due regards for him for representing the sentiments of Kashmiris. Mahjoor pays glowing tributes to his nation in these lines,

*“Bulbul Wanan chu poshan Gulshan watan chu souni
Sonai Watan chu Gulshan Gulshan watan chu souni
Andi Andi Safaid Sangar Deware Sange Mar Mar”.*

Nightingales sing to flowers the beauty of our Garden
Garden is our nation and nation our Garden
Encircled with the lofty marble like white mountains
In the center is the Green Gem of our lord.

Mahjoor also appeals to the nation to maintain communal harmony and not get divided on the basis of religion and community. He asks his nation to shun the path of strife with each other and give up jealousy, hatred, animosity and remain united against the enemy and share love and affection with each other. He says,

*“Nai Traiu Mai Thaiu Panween
 Puz Mohabat Bagruew paneween,
 Dudh chu muslim hund chu shaker saf saf
 Dudh te bea shaker ralaew pane waeween”.*
 Leave difference and love each other
 Share pure love in good faith
 Milk is the Muslim and Hindu the candy sugar
 Thoth will join to make a sweet drink.

Village Babahar

Village Babahar is situated about three km's to the south-east of Pulwama town. On its northern side there is village Tiken Batpora, on its southern side there is village Thamun, on its western side the village is surrounded by village Bunera and on its eastern end there is village Kangan.

According to revenue records the village was dominated by a large class “*Babbahar*”. The chief (*sardar*) of the class was known by the name of *Dewan Vishnudvan*. The sardar of the dynasty named the village after the name of his class. And there is no other *Wajah Tasmaa* about the village.

According to folk belief, the village traces its origin to the medieval period. The villagers are of the opinion that the village owes its name to a *Sufi* saint Mir Syed Hussian Indrabi^{RA}, who is popular by the name of Baba Haji^{RA}. Mir Syed Hussian Indrabi^{RA}, who is enshrined in village Murran, came Kashmir from Indrab. The people of Murran and even of the surrounding villages give concrete confirmation that ruler Zain-ul-abidin had given two nearby villages of Babahar and Babagund as grants for the maintenance of *Dargahi Alia* of Mir Syed Hussian Indrabi^{RA}. Therefore, the village assumed its name, for the village was given as a grant (which is known in Kashmiri language as “*Har*”) for the maintenance of *Asthan-i-sharieh*⁷⁶ of Baba Haji^{RA}. The literary meaning of Babahar is “*Har*” given to *Baba*⁷⁷ (Haji^{RA}). Now the village is also known by the name of Babahard.

Village Bellow Dargund

Village Bellow Dargund is located in the south west of Pulwama. It is about fifty km's away from the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir that is Srinagar. Presently, it falls within the district and tehsil Pulwama. Village Bellow is located in between the *Wudar* land on its western side, and a flood channel (*Arah in Kashmiri language*) in its eastern side, just on the bank of *Pulwama-keller* road. This road links Pulwama in association with other villages including Bellow to *kandi* belt that is *Keller, Mujpathri, zampathri, Chowan, Thearan* etc.

It is unfortunate that the historians seem silent regarding the historical background of village Bellow. So the researcher had to rely upon folklore which is not devoid of historical significance. As per the field study⁷⁸, when the *Chakdari* system prevailed in Kashmir, a man from *Dhar* dynasty namely *Bala Dhar* happened to be a *Chakdar* of this area, and it was the very man who kept the name of village Bellow after his own name. One more folk version is that Dargund is the name of a field (*Kha*). Hence on the basis of *Bala Dhar* and Dargund the village came to be known as Bellow Dargund. It is necessary to mention that now a day's place name has been replaced by "Usmanabad" under the patronage of former Road and Building Minister *Sayed Bashir Ahmad*, who facilitated the village (Bellow) the status of a town. Nevertheless the residents of the village and even of the surrounding villages do not prefer to use *Usmanabad* for the village because the village name Bellow is on the tip of tongue of every resident of the village. It is said that *Sayed Bashir Ahmad* kept the name "Usmanabad" to Bellow on the basis of his father *Usman Shah*. The revenue record of the village supports the folk version.

Village Tiken Batpora

Village Tiken Batpora is situated at about five km's from district headquarter of Pulwama. The people of the village inhabit around sides of the road which passes from *Pulwama to Shadimarg* which is a very busy road.

With regard to the historical background about the place name of the village, there is no concrete evidence or reference about it. Still there is one folk version about the place name of the village. That states, in ancient times there used to live a person known by the name of “*Tika Bhata*”, who was not actually inhabitant of the village but came from a nearby village⁷⁹ and settled in the village and it came to be named after his name. According to revenue records in ancient times there used to live Hindus in the village. In the beginning, the whole land of the village was uncultivated, after some time, with increase in population, the people of the village began to cultivate the land. Although, in the village, at the present time there is no Hindu family in the village, but still the village is known and famous by the name of Tiken Bhatpora.

Village Pahoo

Village Pahoo is situated about twenty six km’s to the south of Srinagar on the main *Srinagar Pulwama* via *Pampore* road. Presently it falls within the district and tehsil Pulwama. The village is about six km’s away from the district headquarter.

As per the revenue records the old name of village Pahoo was “*Pohvan*” meaning a thick forest. This fact is also substituted by our observation of the neighbouring areas. Still the neighbouring villages of *Newa*, *Lajoora*, posses a vast variety of forest tress, which indicates that village Pahoo might had been a dense and thick forest in remote times.

As per folk belief⁸⁰ the name of the village, Pahoo have been evolved from the name “*Pohvan*” meaning thick or dense forest. *Wajah Tasmee* about the origin of the place name of the village substantiates folk version, for the villagers of Pahoo and even of the neighbouring villages narrates the same story.

There is a sacred shrine of Baba Latif-ud-Din Ambali^{RA}, who is said to have come from Ambala (Punjab). The villagers are of the opinion that till the arrival of the saint in the village, the village was known by the name of *Pohvan* and it is the saint who changed the name of the village from *Pohavan* to Pahoo.

Village Ratnipora

Village Ratnipora is located on the both sides of the banks of perennial stream *Nala Lar*⁸¹. The village is situated just nine km's in the north east of Pulwama town and is accessible by means of a smooth road. The village is surrounded by many villages. It is a compact settlement more or less linear in outlook. However rectangular pattern of settlement has emerged with a rapid growth in population with new construction taking place since the past few years.

With regard to the history of the village, no account with authenticity can be recovered in this description. However many stories and legends are popular regarding the origin and the name of this village. But according to revenue records the village has derived its name from a lake named *Rattan Sar*⁸². The most reliable evidence which sounds truth is mentioned in Rajatarangini by most reputed historian of Kashmir Kalhana. According to this description⁸³ the village Ratnipora was founded by *Rattan Devi* during the rule of *Raja jai* (1128-1149 AD). *Rani Rattan Devi* created a beautiful *Matha*⁸⁴ in the centre of this village.

In fact, the presence of common elements in the midst of diverse religious practices can be seen in the second major area of the cultural ideological dimension of the period⁸⁵. This is reflected in the growth of the institution of the preceptor (*the Acharya or the guru*), the central figure in an institution like the *Matha* or the monastery which often in combination with the temple constituted the sacred complex in mundane landscape⁸⁶. The royalty almost invariably subscribed to Brahmanical ideology; *deva-dvija-guru-puja*⁸⁷, or the worship of the deity (*deva*), the Brahman (*dvija*) and the preceptor (*guru*). The *Mathas* functioned as nodes in dissemination and networks of sectarian and philosophical traditions⁸⁸... *The Jammu and Kashmir Cultural Academy* in the publication of its famous *Encyclopedia of Kashmir* quotes the same detail in vol. 1 under the content *Ratana Devi's Matha*. The exact location of the *Matha* built by *Rani Rattan Devi* is a matter of ambiguity. It is said that it was present in Ratnipora village. This plateau was later on leveled down for the purpose of making the land fit for cultivation. It has been observed at the time of leveling

down the plateau that it would have been the exact location of the *Matha*. The stones, broken earthen, pots and tappers etc., which were brought out from the place, bear testimony to this fact.

It is probably due to the presence of this *Matha* that a settlement began to cluster around it and assumed the name of Ratnipora. The present day name of this village is recorded as Ratnipora in all official and private documents. The archeological evidence and folklore suggest the same conclusion that the Ratnipora was an important centre of Hinduism on the eve of spread of Islam in Kashmir.

Village Dadoora

Dadoora is a small village in tehsil Pulwama. As the fact remains we have no written records about the history of the background of the name of village Dadoora, therefore on the basis of archaeological and conventional sources we cannot trace the origin of the place name of Dadoora. But there are two folk versions regarding the place name of the village. In village Dadoora, in earlier times, there was a temple of goddess *Devi* and it is believed that the village has been named after the *Devi* and with the passage of time it got reshaped into present the name of Dadoora

It is generally accepted by the archeologists and historians that Kashmir was ruled by different ruling dynasties. It is substantiated by the various historical sites which have been discovered so far, for example, *Harvan*, *Semthan*, *Donpathar*, *Kothal* etc. Many towns and villages were established by different rulers of different dynasties. Similarly many places were named after many gods and goddesses.

As far as the second version regarding the background of the place name of Dadoora is concerned, a legend is in circulation that there is a table land which is about two hectares in area, known as "*Darbal*". It is believed that here the word *Dar* is basically the evolution of *Dera* (camp). The villagers state that Shah-I-Hamadan laid his camp there for one night and later on the field came to

be known as *Darbal*. It is reported by the villagers that perhaps right from *Darbal* this place came to be known as Dadoora. Moreover, the revenue record of the village does not give us any sort of clue about the origin and background of the place name of the village.

Village Ashmandar

Village Ashmandar is a small village and lies just three kilometers away from the district headquarters. Village Ashmandar by the very name seems to an ancient place which was religiously and spiritually very important. The locals⁸⁹ say that there were eight temples or *Asht mandor* in the village. Etymologically we can say that there had been temples sacred to some *Ashru* goddess. It has been a village of warriors in ancient times that used to fight wars and battles. They were known as *Dangers* or *Dars* in later times. There is no revenue record about the origin of the place name of the village.

However, it is noteworthy to mention here that villages *Ashmander*, *Murran*, *Kangan*, *Sirun*, *Thamun*, *Tiken*, *Pingelin* and some other villages date back to Vedic period. Etymologically, these names have been derived from words or derivatives which were prevalent in the Vedic period.

Village Prichoo

There is a famous folk saying⁹⁰ in circulation in which a comparison has been made among the people of village *Prichoo*, *Pulwama* town and *Washbugh* (a hamlet of *Pulwama* town). The folk saying is as follows:

Prisi Prisneinei, Pulwami ruzinei, Washbugh nerizinei.

(People of *Prichoo* will not invite you, do not stay at *Pulwama*, do not come out from *Washbugh*).

Village *Prichoo* is located on the *Pulwama-Srinagar* road. As per the revenue records the village is comprised of two hundred families. The physiography of the village is plain touching with villages *Wagam* on one side

and *Gangoo* on the other side. Many offices of district Pulwama fall in the vicinity of the village. Recently a fruit *mandi* has been opened in the village. A small water stream passes through the territory of the village. The village from ancient times used to have no dearth of water. This is proved by the famous proverb dike under dike (*Danji-Tal-Dand*) which means that if one farmer will block the supply of water for irrigational purposes, which in Kashmir is known as *Dand Gandin*, the water of equal quantity will come down even after blocking a stream.

With regard to the historical background about the origin of the place name of the village, there are two broad folk versions: the first folk version is that from very early times the outsiders used to settle in the village. No objection was raised against the settlement of outsiders in the village, so it got the name of Prichoo. This view is substantiated by several other facts and arguments. According to the revenue documents the village was comprised of only four Bhat families, all people belonging to other *krams* were outsiders. Secondly during the last few decades three new colonies emerged and about half of the population of these colonies is of outsiders. Thirdly if we look up on the graveyard of the village, this also speaks us the reality of this version.

There is yet another folk version about the place name of the village, according to which village Gangoo was a big *pargana* and there used to live a big family. One member left his family and resided at a long distance from the family. Then after some time, the head of the family is said to have invited him, so with the passing of time place came to be known as Prichoo. It is substantiated by the fact that the village has one *Halqa*, one *Panchayat*, one *Chaukidur* and one *Patwari*. Both these folk versions are very close to each other and both seem to be correct. But unfortunately, the revenue record of the village does not speak about the etymology of place name of village Prichoo.

Village Galbugh

Village Galbugh is situated twenty five km's to the south west of Srinagar. Presently the Village falls within block *Kakapora*, tehsil and district Pulwama. The village is surrounded on its north east by *Mohanwigi* and on its north west by *Ratnipora*. It has plain topography and is connected by three roads –*Ratnipora Galbugh* road, *Mohanwigi Galbugh* road and *Hajipora Galbugh* road. The railway line passes through the village. The canal which is known as *Bud Kul/Nallah Lar* bisects the village into two equal parts and on both sides of its banks the village is situated.

With regard to the etymology of Galbugh (*Wajah tasmea*)⁹¹, we do not find any worthwhile information. Nevertheless, from the revenue records of the village, we come to know that the first inhabitants of the village belong to *Hurra* community⁹². However, the village is known by the name of Galbugh from past times and is still known by the same name⁹³. There is no historical monument present in the village.

With regard to historical background of the place name of village Galbugh, there are two folk versions: one is that the village name Galbugh is comprised of two Persian words “*Gal*” and “*Bugh*”. While the former means crop, latter means much quantity or enough quantity. Thus Galbugh in its literary sense means “*enough crop quantity*”. In earlier times there was much production of crops in the village. It was on behalf of fertile soil of the village because floods occur there after every four to five years⁹⁴. Moreover on one hand more land was available but on the other hand human population was less, so the production was more than the subsistence of the village.

Second folk version about the historical background of the place name is that the village is called Galbugh because in earlier times⁹⁵, there was made collection of crops (*Gala*) in sacks by *Chakdars* of the time. As *Chakdars* made collection of crops in the village from different surrounding villages, the village came to be known by the name of Galbugh.

Village Murran

Village Murran is about three kilometers to the west of Pulwama town. It is an ancient village and was in ascendancy, politically and spiritually, in the ancient times.

There are two folk versions regarding the background of the place name of the village⁹⁶. The prominent folk version states that it has been named after Mir Syed Hussian Indrabi^{RA97}. The birth place of Syed Hussian Indrabi^{RA} was *Indrab* and he entered the valley with Hazrat Mir Mohammad Hamadani ^{RA}. Syed Hussian Indrabi^{RA} was handed over to Hazrat Shiekh Nooridani Noorani^{RA} for his spiritual guidance. After completing tour of Kashmir he joined the Caliphs of the Shiek^{RA}. After having attained spiritual elevation he went on pilgrimage of *Harmain Sharif* on the permission of Hazrat Shiekh^{RA} and then after he returned village Murran.

As per another folk version, the name Murran has been derived from *Moran*. Raja More⁹⁸ has founded the village. This fact is supported by the names of other villages in its environs – *Kangan*, *Siriyun*, *Tiken* and some other villages. As we found that village Tunjan has been founded by Raja Tunjan. However, the *Wajah Tasmai* of the village supports the first folk version about the origin and background of the place name of the village.

Village Rajpora

Rajpora is located in the South-West of Kashmir. It is about fifty km's away from the summer capital of Jammu and Kashmir that is Srinagar. Presently, it falls within the district and tehsil Pulwama. Village Rajpora is located in between the *Wudar* land on its western side and flood channel (*Arah*) called *Kani-Arah* in its eastern side, just on the bank of *Pulwama-Shadimarg* road. Village Rajpora extends over an area of six thousand two hundred fifteen *kanals* of land.

It is unfortunate that there are no written records regarding the historical background of the place name Rajpora. So we had to rely upon the folklore

which is not devoid of historical significance. There are different, divergent and contrasting versions regarding the place name of village Rajpora.

The original name of village Rajpora was “*Boaw*”⁹⁹. But the villagers are quite silent with regard to the question that why the village in earlier times was known as *Boaw*. Although the villagers and even the people of the surrounding villages are quite aware that when and who changed the name of the village from *Boaw* to Rajpora.

The villagers of Rajpora present one or the other version regarding the background of place name of village Rajpora. The first version is that Maharaja Gulab Singh once visited the village and the village by that time was known by the name of “*Boaw*”¹⁰⁰. It is said that the Maharaja was respectfully welcomed and above all a good arrangement was made by *Mir Dynasty* for his service¹⁰¹. Maharaja Gulab Singh thought that the village in which he was shown such courtesy should be the village of Rajas and hence named the village as Rajpora.

The second version is that once Maharaja Pratab Singh visited village Shadimarg for the Pilgrimage of Sikh *Gurudwara*. And when the Maharaja arrived Shadimarg a washer man (*Dhob*) of Mir dynasty made a petition to the Maharaja and invited him to Boaw, his own village, on behalf of Mir dynasty. The Maharaja accepted the invitation and came to the village where he was warmly welcomed by the *Mir dynasty* of the village and was accorded great respect and was provided food with special dishes. Maharaja Pratab Singh stayed at a place called by the name of *Shahnisheen* for three days and gave the name of Rajpora to village *Boaw*. It is very unfortunate that the revenue record of the village has been burnt during summer agitation of 2010 as such we have no revenue record available about the etymology of the place name of the village.

However, as a student of history the researcher is inclined to believe that the first version holds less water as compared to the second version because Maharaja Gulab Singh ruled for only few years and he spent all time of his reign in consolidating his power in the state.

Village Shadimarg

The village Shadimarg is a small village inhabited by about one hundred five families and is situated about fifteen km's from district Pulwama and lies in the south-west of district Pulwama. It falls within tehsil and district Pulwama and is forty nine km's, away from capital city of Srinagar. This village is inhabited by two different religious communities, the Muslims and Sikhs. The Muslims constitute about eighty two of the total population of the village.

With regard to the history of the village, no authentic account is available. However, few stories are popular regarding the background of the place name of this village. One such popular story goes like that once the Mughal King *Jahangir* (1606-1628), who became so enamored of the Valley of Kashmir as to make it "the place of his favourite abode, and he often declared that he would rather be deprived of every province of his mighty empire than lose *Kachemire*"¹⁰², visited Kashmir with his queen *Noor Jehan* and during their visit; they stayed in Shadimarg *Sarie* for few days. During their stay the queen *Noor Jehan* gave birth to a child and on this occasion the emperor Jahangir became very happy and named this new born prince as Shad. But after two or three days this new born prince died and the Jahangir became very sad and named this place after this historical event as Shadimarg (*death of Shad*).

According to another view, this place is called as Shajimarg. The word Shajimarg is the combination of two words viz., "*Shaji*", means female fox and "*Marg*"¹⁰³ means forest or *Jungel*. And it is said that this place was in earlier times a jungle and the foxes in this region were in abundance, so it is called as Shajimarg. The revenue records also mentioned this place by the name of Shajimarg.

Village Harpora

Village Harpora is situated about seven km's away from head quarter of district Pulwama. As far as the history of the background of the place name of the village is concerned, the elders of the village are of the opinion that the

village assumed its name from a spring, present in the middle of the village. The spring is known by the name of “*Har-Nag*”¹⁰⁴. According to folklore, when Hindu people¹⁰⁵, before the advent of Islam in Kashmir, entered the village, they settled around the spring and the hamlet came to be known as Harpora. The spring still survives, though in dying situation. There is also a Hindu temple near the spring. It is said that the temple was built by *Gopinath* about thirty to thirty five years ago. The temple still survives in the village, although there is no Hindu family in the village. However, there is no *patwaari*¹⁰⁶ record about the etymology of the place name of the village because the village is no more a revenue village. Village Harpora has possibly been named after goddess *Hara*.

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4. Manu, Metekingi, Maori from the Whangui iwi (“tribe”).
5. Varshney, Dr. Radhey L., *An Introductory Textbook of Linguistics & Phonetics*, Student Store, Civil Lines, Rampur Bagh, Bareilly, sixteenth edition, 2005-06, p. 122.
6. Ibid.
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10. Kalhana, *Rajatarangini*, vol. I. Translated into English by Stein, M. A., Reprint. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979, note 30. Also see Ray, Sunil Chandra, *Early History and Culture of Kashmir*, New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1970, pp. 155-158.
11. Stein, M. A., *Kalhana's Rajatarangini*, Reprint. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1979, vol. II, p. 369, note 85.
12. For an excellent argument that *Vor* is not the corrupt form of *vihara*, but means a settlement, abode, place of living, see Mohi-ud-Din, Akthar's *A Fresh Approach to the History of Kashmir*, pp. 34-35.
13. Kalhana, *Rajatarangini*, vol. I. Translated into English by Stein, M. A., op. cit., p. 175.
14. Ibid., vol. I. p. 338.
15. Ibid., vol. V. p. 44.

16. Ibid., vol. IV. p. 213.
17. Ibid., vol. I. p. 96.
18. Ibid., vol. I. p. 341.
19. Ibid., vol. IV. p. 483.
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21. Ibid., vol. IV. p. 695.
22. Ibid., vol. IV. p. 10.
23. Ibid., vol. VIII. p. 2434.
24. Ibid., vol. VIII. p. 2443.
25. Ibid., vol. V. p. 118.
26. Ibid., vol. V. p. 39.
27. Ibid., vol. II. p. 62.
28. Based on the information provided by Prof. Nazir Ahmad Dhar, Head of Linguistics department, University of Kashmir.
29. Stein, M. A., Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 369, fn. 85, 372.
30. Ibid.
31. Kalhana, *Rajatarangini*, op. cit., I. 88, 90, 96, 98, 100, 121, 175, 311, 314, 340, 441, 343; II. 55; III. 376, 481; IV. 9, 639; V. 23, 24, 170, 397, 403, 442; VII. 182, 184, 185, 608, 808, 809, 908, VIII. 2408, 2419, 2420, 3355.
32. Of some quarters of Srinagar which are famous after Muslim saints or institutions mention may be made of *Hisari Sabun* (The place of Saiyid Hisari), *Jami Masjid*, *Khanqah-i-Mu alla*, *Pir Haji Muhammad*, *Madin Sabun*, *Bulbul Langar*, *Baha aldin Sabun*, *Uwasi Sabun*, etc.
33. Jonaraja, *Dvitiya Rajatarangini*. Translated into English by J. C. Dutt. Calcutta: 1898., pp. 23, 37, 41-42, 53, 59, 88; Srivara, *Jaina Rajatarangini*. Translated into English by J. C. Dutt. Calcutta: 1898, pp. 139-39, 142; Sayyid Ali, f. 3a, 19a; Anonymous, *Baharistan-i-Shahi*, R. P. D. 491, f. 10b, 16b, 22b.
34. Bloch, March, *French Rural History* (tr. By Janet Sondheimer), London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Limited, 1966, intr. p. xxvi.

35. Source: *Misle Haqueyat*, Pulwama Revenue record.
36. Source: *Census Department*.
37. Based on the interviews conducted on 11-03-2011, with local village residents, namely Abdul Ahad Lone, farmer, age 78 years old; Mohammad Akbar Dar, retired Government employee, age 60 years old; Gh. Hassan Dar, farmer, age 58 years old, Gh. Qadir Khan, business man, age 53 years old, besides many other villagers who are of the opinion that in the village eleven springs (*Kah-Nag*) were famous and from *Kah-Nags* the village came to be known by the name of Kangan.
38. Based on interview with Gh. Mohammad Dar, retired Government employee, age 58 years old; Abdul Gani Dar, Government employee, age 55 years old; Abdul Rashid Dar, Government employee, age 59 years old; Mohammad Khalil Dar, farmer, age 76 years old and many other villagers of village Kangan Pulwama, on 11-03-2011.
39. The *Kani-Nag* still survives and is situated in the northwest direction of the village.
40. Interview with Abdul Salam Dar, retired teacher, age 82 years old; Abdul Samad Dar, farmer, age 62 years old; Munver Haji, farmer, age 78 years old; and other inhabitants of village Kangan Pulwama, on 11-03-2001.
41. The literary meaning of Kangan is bangles.
42. Although Abdul Razak Dar, a resident of the village, age about 130 years old, believe in this version but still most of the villagers deny the version.
43. This is attributed to Sheikh-ul-Alam^{RA}.
44. The saying is attributed to Sheikh-ul-Alam^{RA}.
45. Mir Mirak Andrabi^{RA} was one of the disciples of Mir Syed Ali Hamadani^{RA}, popularly known as Amir-i-Kabir – the founder of the Kubravi sect in Kashmir.
46. Based on the field survey and interview with residents of village Puchal namely Abdul Majid Wani, shopkeeper, age 72 years old; Gh. Muhideen Wani, tailor, age about 67 years old; Abdul Gani Wani, Freedom fighter, age about 75 years old; Mohammad Subhan Lone, principal of a Private school age about 68 years old etc., on 17-03-2011.

47. Lawrence, Walter R., *The Valley of Kashmir*, Oxford University Press, London, 1895, (reprint, Srinagar, 1967). p. 312.
48. Ibid. p. 312.
49. Interview with the local residents of village Tengtuna namely Mohammad Anwar Lone, Government employee, age 56 years old; Abdul Rashid Dar, farmer, age 64 years old, Mohammad Suban Wani, farmer, age about 58 years old; on 18-03-2011.
50. Although the nag has been brought down from the hill by a Brahman but still on the top of the *teng* there are traces of a *Nag*.
51. In Kashmir *nag gar* (the fish of a spring) has become idiom for all those things which one can only see but cannot taste or enjoy.
52. Ghazi, Baba Nasib al-Din, *Nur-nama*, R. P. D., 795, ff. 373-75a; Khaki, Baba Daud, *Rashi-nama*, R. P. D., ff. 82b- 83a.
53. Stein, M. A., *Kalhana's, Rajatarangini*, op. cit., vol. I, p. 38.
54. Stein, M. A., *Kalhana's Rajatarangini*, op. cit., vol. II, p. 335.
55. For instance, in village Nowdal (Tral), there is a place still called Gangabal, where up to the recent times the pandits of the area used to visit for taking a sacred bath after returning from Amarnath Yatra.
56. Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, Delhi; Manas Publications, 1992. Compiled under the Direction of the Quarter Master General in India in the Intelligence Branch. p. 696.
57. In Kashmir many villages have been named after the names of some famous Sufi Saints, who played an important role in spreading the message of Islam in different villages. As such the village was named after the name of Roma Rishi^{RA}.
58. Tahiri, Peerzada Abdul Khaliq, *Tazkiri Auliyai Kashmir*, Srinagar, Gulshan Publishers, vol. I. p. 496.
59. Pilgrimage to Mecca which is one of the fundamentals of Islam.
60. Tahiri, Peerzada Abdul Khaliq, *Tazkiri Auliyai Kashmir*, op. cit., vol. I. p. 496.

61. The *Rishi* came Kashmir during the rule of Raja Jassaka, of Lohara dynasty which was the last Hindu dynasty of Kashmir, who ruled Kashmir from 1180 A.D to 1198A.D.
62. Roma was a Greek god, the supporters of this version said that in past times the village was a Greek settlement.
63. Koul, Pandit Anand, *Archaeological Remains in Kashmir*, Printed at Mercantile Press, 1935, preface, p.23.
64. See Kalhana's *Rajatarangini*, op. cit., vol. I, footnote to verse 107.
65. Village Ramu is prettily situated a little from the left bank of the *Ramchu* River.
66. The whole Pulwama district is divided into three main zones viz; *wudar zone, kandi zone and cherate zone*. The village lies in *cherate zone*.
67. Source: revenue record of the village.
68. A river in Kashmir, raises on the eastern slops of the *Pir Panjal range*, just north of the *Pir Panjal pass*; it is at first known as the *Kachgul*, but after debouching into the plain through a rich and narrow Valley between *wudars*, about four miles south east of *Chrar*, it is called the *Ramchu*. It falls into the *Jhelum* just below the village of *Kakapura*.
69. Interview with some elders of the village namely: Abdul Khaliq Rather, age 67 years old; Mohammad Subhan Rather, age 59 years old, Gh. Mohammad Dar, age about 70 years old, etc., on 28-03-2011.
70. Kashmir has been ruled by many ruling dynasties from time to time, while some of them were outsiders and some belong to Valley. Many villages and towns of Kashmir had been founded by rulers of different dynasties and empires after their names.
71. The religion Zoroastrianism was founded in Persia and is still practiced in some parts of the world. Many cultural traits including Zoroastrianism of the Iranian civilization reached Kashmir by both direct and indirect means.
72. Names like *Har, Asha, Mitra* are the names of the Zoroastrian gods.
73. Wani, Mohammad Ashraf, *Islam in Kashmir, (Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century)*, Oriental Publishing House, 2004, p. 39.

74. Who came Kashmir in the time of Sultan Qutb -ub- Din, held the opinion that the “*Muslims should limit their desires according to the dictates of religion but they should not annihilate them like the Hindu Sadhus or Muslim Faqirs*”.
75. A pilgrimage; visit to a shrine; in the Valley it also denotes a glimpse of the relics on special occasions at various shrines. The shrine of Hazratbal in Srinagar is famous for being the repository of the Prophet’s sacred hair that is exhibited on special occasions.
76. Abode; shrine: place of pilgrimage.
77. The term is used in Persian and Kashmiri for a kind of Muslim *Rishis*.
78. Interview with Abdul Gani Rasikh who is presently a journalist and age about 55 years old; Gh. Rasool Chat, a famous poet, age 68 years old on 16-04-2011.
79. According to some elders of the village, he might have come from village Murran.
80. The folktale has been narrated to the researcher during field study by some elders of the village namely Gh. Mohammad Lone, working in Food and Control deptt, age about 57 years old; Mohammad Yousuf Mir working as Girdawar, age about 54 years old; Haji Gh. Ahmad Dar age about 105 years old; Mohammad Yaseen Shah, shopkeeper age about 70 years old conducted on 20-04-2011.
81. *Nala Lar* which originates from Shopian is an important tributary of river Jhelum.
82. It is said that a lake named *Rattan Sar* existed in ancient times but the evidence is not ascertained anyway.
83. Kalhana’s *Rajatarangini*. op. cit., vol. VIII. 2434.
84. The growth of the Hindu *Mathas* or monasteries in the post ‘classical’ period, which somewhat paralleled the Buddhist and Jaina monastic orders, particularly among the Shiva sects, was of momentous significance.

85. Brajadulal, Chatto padhyaya, *Studying Early India: Archaeology, Texts, and Historical Issues*, published by Permanent Black D – 28 Oxford Apartments, 11, I.P. Extension, Delhi 2005, p. 162.
86. Alvarez, Sergio Meliton Carrasoco, '*Brahmanical Monastic Institution in Early Medieval North India: Studies in Their Doctrinal and Sectarian Background, Patronage and Spatial Distribution*', Ph. D. dissertation (Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University New Delhi, 1990).
87. Jha, D. N., '*State Formation in a Peripheral Region: The Case of Early Medieval Chamba*', in Jha, D. N., ed., *The Feudal Order: State, Society and Ideology in Early Medieval India*, Delhi, 2000, pp. 197-210.
88. Mirashi, V. V., *Inscriptions of the Kalachuri – Chedi Era (Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, vol. iv pt.i)* (Ootacamund, 1955), Cli.
89. Interview with Mohammad Yusuf Bhat, a resident of village Ashmandar, farmer, age about 54 years old; Badrinath, a Hindu resident of village Murran, private school teacher, age about 68 years old.
90. Some people of village Prichoo and of other villages are of the opinion that this famous saying has been quoted by Sheikh-ul-Alam^{RA} but others deny the opinion and are saying that it is a common Kashmiri saying.
91. "*Wajah Tasma*" is combination of two Persian words "*Wajah*" and "*Tasma*". While former means reason, latter means name. Thus *Wajah Tasma* in its literary sense means reason for naming a place.
92. Some elderly persons of *Hurra* community on different occasions migrated from Hurrpora Shopian and settled in the village: source revenue record of the village.
93. As such we find no written information in the revenue records or in any other record about the historical background of the place name of Galbugh.
94. The village is flood prone area and is commonly known as *Salab Pather*. The River *Jhelum*, which is three km's away from its north east side, is the cause of floods in the area.

95. When feudal system was prevalent in Kashmir, the feudal lords (*Chakdars*) of the area used to collect and store their share of production in the village.
96. The people of the village held two opinions regarding the background of the place name. While Muslims held the opinion that the village was named after Syed Hussian Indrabi^{RA}, the Hindu people of the village claim proudly that the village has been named after See Raja More, the so called *Koti Raji* of the time.
97. According to Muslim population of the village when Syed Hussian Indrabi^{RA} came and settled in the village then after the people of the surrounding villages were saying that we will go "*Mirihendh*" (the abode of Syed Hussian Indrabi^{RA}). After some time the word *Mirihendh* was on the tip of tongue of the people. With the passage of time the villages became popular by the present name of Murran.
98. Ramesh Kumar, a resident of village Murran, who have migrated to Jammu, published an article in Hindu Voice entitled "Murran Town will live forever in the memories of Kashmiri Hindus" have mentioned the old name of Murran as '*Mayurana*', p. 1.
99. Even at present time some people call the village by this name but mostly all people of the village have looked over the original name of the village.
100. The Maharaja stayed at a place called "*Dubwan*".
101. Who were by that time the big landlords and they were influential not only in their village but also were famous for their wealth and social dignity in the surrounded villages.
102. Bernier, 401. '*Kashmir*', remarked Jahangir, '*is a garden of eternal spring or an iron fort to a palace of kings- a delightful flower bed and a heart- expanding heritage for dervishes*'. And he summed up his description with these words, '*If one were to take to praise Kashmir whole books would have to be written*'. *Tuzuk-i- Jahangiri* (R. & B.), 11, pp. 143-44.

103. There is a Persian word *Marg* signifying a garden abounding in plants, but the Kashmiris use the word to denote land lying at a distance from the abode of men.
104. “*Har is the Kashmiri name of the goddess Sarika as well as of the Sarika bird (Maina)*”. Stein, op. cit., II, p. 443.
105. According to the villagers in about 11th century A.D. few Hindu families from nearby village Murran came here as a result of growth of population and as a result of less availability of springs in the village which were the only source of drinking water at the time.
106. A record keeper of the land of a village or villages.

CHAPTER-III



HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS OF TEHSIL PULWAMA

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HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS OF TEHSIL PULWAMA

Sad fragility of human things! How many centuries and thousands of generations have passed away, of which history, probably, will never tell us anything ... how many distinguished [people] – artists, sovereigns, and warriors – whose names were worthy of immortality, are now forgotten, laid to rest under the thick dust which covers tombs!

– Henri Mouhot¹

The past is a hotly contested arena of modern times,² and the fact that it has become so is in a large measure due to a sense of monolithic, racist past that we have inherited as a colonial legacy in a large part of the world³. The application of new techniques and using appropriate methodology has started to revolutionize the archaeological research. There is hardly any need to lay hand on enormous quantities of material if it is not arranged in a descriptive historic manner, in spatio-temporal way.

The researcher may here draw attention to another theoretical point. Because of the intrinsic character of its data and of the time-span over which these data are spread, archaeologists are forced to take an essentially long term view of history at the grassroots level⁴. To use the evocative words of a French historian, Braudel, this kind of history is the history of man *‘in his intimate relationship to the earth which bears and feeds him; it is a dialogue which never stops repeating itself, which repeats itself in order to persist, which may and does change superficially, but which goes on, tenaciously, as though it were somehow beyond time’s reach and ravages’*. Although Braudel did not write this specifically in the context of archaeological past, we feel that this vividly echoes

a very important part of archaeological reality, and we have tried to remain aware of it throughout the course of this chapter.

Archaeological findings and anthropological researches establish the antiquity, history, and development of prehistoric man through time. This is traced with the help of the reminiscences of the material culture, and the fossils of humans and contemporary primates. The material culture⁵, at the beginning of human history, mainly consisted of stone tools⁶, which were made and used by man⁷ over the years gone by. With the manufacture and use of these stone tools there came into existence an archaeological age termed as the Palaeolithic period. The Palaeolithic, earlier called the Old Stone Age, is the longest stage in the cultural evolution of man, dating from about 2.4 MY BP to about 9000 BC when various types of rough surfaced stone tools were made, but never ground to produce an even surface. However, the evolution of human species can be broadly summed up as under:

Table I: Archaeological/Hominid chronology

Years BP X 1000	Geology	Archaeology	Homo species
9		Neolithic Mesolithic	
12	Holocene		
		Upper Palaeolithic	
40			Homo sapiens
80	Upper Pleistocene	Middle Palaeolithic	Neanderthals
8,00	Middle Pleistocene		
1,000			
			Homo erectus
2,000	Lower Pleistocene		
		Lower Palaeolithic	
	Upper Pliocene		Homo habilis
2,500			

Source: M. K. Nickles, et al, The Study of Physical Anthropology and Archaeology, London, 1979.

The accounts of Kashmir, starting from the days of Nilmatapurana and Kalhana's Rajatarangini, take back the history of her inhabitants to an age that was in essence prehistoric in nature and character⁸. Nevertheless such records seem to be mythical in order, often, without providing substantial reasons to prove them. Again, some of these accounts claim to have used archaeological data for the reconstruction of the bygone societies but not much attention was paid to the factors relevant to the survival and development of human culture. However, there are two good reasons why a historical study of ancient Kashmir cannot realize its full potential on the basis of textual sources alone. First, the sources which have been used except for the history of kings of Kashmir, written by Kalhana in the twelfth century, were not meant to be historical sources, and second whatever historical information has been gleaned from them is not free from questions regarding their chronology, geographical applicability and even content. Therefore for the complete reenactment of Kashmir's past a historian has to lean heavily on archaeology.

Doubtlessly the fascinating explorations of Hellmut de, T. T. Paterson and their comprehensive recordings have attracted scholars but comparatively recent interdisciplinary works on palaeo-botany, environment, climate, ecology, physiography, etc. in Kashmir and Punjab Siwaliks by scientists drawn from various disciplines have revealed some unnoticed facts that serve as model to enlarge the scope of the works like this. Similarly the pioneering work on the archaeological research by Prof. H. D. Shankalia, et al, has changed the course of the research in Kashmir. Likewise the works of T. N. Kazanchi and A. K. Sharma is extraordinary significant. In spite of that to build the vivid history of early man in Kashmir is not very easy as most of the archaeological and stratigraphical details of their excavations at Burzahom and Gufkral remain unpublished. During their extensive explorations in the 1930's for the study of the geological stratigraphy and associated human cultures of the Pleistocene epoch, Hellmut de Terra and T. T. Paterson found no Palaeolithic implements in Kashmir even though these were abundantly found in the Potwar⁹. The reason for the absence of man was attributed to the severe and intense cold climate and

the violent tectonic disturbances which occurred in the Pleistocene epoch. However, the theory was challenged in 1969 when Prof. H. D. Shankalia discovered two the Lower Palaeolithic tools in the Liddar Valley of Pahalgam, in north Kashmir. Both of these tools not only proved the presence of man in Kashmir but it was also remarkable that both the tools are the earliest in Asia, as demonstrated by their stratigraphical location and technique of their manufacture.

The Kashmir Valley lies towards the north west of peninsular India¹⁰. Despite its geographical isolation, Kashmir has, from ancient times, been a melting pot of nations and cultures¹¹. The beautiful and luxuriant Valley of Kashmir, with its superb climate and sceneries of gorgeous splendor and with its measurable appeal, has always a ring of charm about it, which defies any but a fairy pen to describe¹². Verily a dream of loveliness it is – nay, “*If there be an Elysium on earth, it is this, it is this*”, as goes a well known Persian saying rendered into English by Thomas Moore in his *Lalla Rookh*.

The artifacts of Kashmir archaeology that have come to surface are mostly stone remnants of primitive humans. The villagers can give no information as to the history of these remains, save the vague guess that they were the works of the Buddhists or of the Pandus¹³. On the basis of shape, size and technique of manufacture the tools are divided into three successive periods: the Lower Palaeolithic, the Middle Palaeolithic and the Upper Palaeolithic. Besides these tools the archaeological heritage of Kashmir is in the form of sites and monuments and is distributed all most all over the Valley and contiguous areas reflects the glorious achievements of the past history of Kashmir. These monuments are of cardinal importance in the history of Indian art and architecture while remains of proto-historic and historic periods as found in different sites in the Kashmir Valley are unique in ways more than one¹⁴. These monuments display refinement and art, their ponderous solidity of structure being relieved by the grace of colossal sculpture coupled with an inexhaustible variety of architectural details which have called forth the admiration of visitors from within the country and outside. In early times this country attracted the

attention of great Chinese travelers, like Hieun Tsiang (631-33 A. D.) and Oukong (759 A. D.), who made accurate records of its ancient temples. There are few ruins in India comparable to them. Dr. Neve rightly says, “*Ancient India has nothing more worthy of its early Civilization than the grand ruins in Kashmir, which are the pride of the Kashmiris and admiration of travelers. The massive, the grotesque and elegant in architecture may be admirable in parts of India, but nowhere is to be found in counterpart of the classically graceful, yet symmetrically massive, edifices than in Kashmir*”¹⁵.

“*The Valley of Kashmir*” says Lawrence “*is the holy land of the Hindus*”. He says “*I have rarely been in any village which cannot show some relic of antiquity – curious stone miniatures of the old Kashmiri temples (Kulr-Muru), huge stone seats of Mahadeo (Badrpith) inverted by pious Musalmans, Phallic emblems innumerable, and carved images heaped in grotesque confusion by some clear spring, have met me at every turn*”¹⁶. Abul Fazal tells us that “*the whole country is regarded as holy ground by the Hindu sages*”¹⁷. He also refers in general terms to the numerous shrines dedicated to the various deities, and to the popular worship of ‘snakes’ i.e. the Nagas “*of whom wonderful stories are told*”. He then proceeds to describe in detail the most notable sites, giving among these particular prominences to what Dr. Bernier aptly called ‘*less merveilles*’ of the country¹⁸.

Temples more than any other monuments, symbolized what could be considered majestic and memorable in the structural landscape of early Medieval Kashmir, and it is understandable that there is a huge corpus of literature which has come to be written about them. Writings on temples focus mainly on their architectural features, the ways these features correspond to or deviate from the impressive bulk of *Silpasastra* texts, and on evolutions of regional styles of temple architecture¹⁹. These are excellent works also on general metaphysical – symbolical background of Hindu temples; detailed investigation into religious and iconographical dimensions of what a single or a complex of temples presents have also been undertaken²⁰. For many years now, a multi-volume series of encyclopedic nature has been under preparation, and regular publication,

ensuring easy access to details of individual temples and temple complex sites in their respective spatial and temporal locations. Even so, looking at temples as cultural products of the ages in which they came up, a historian may perhaps be left with the feeling that historical studies of temples, in so far as they are able to depart from purely technical architectural, iconographic or highly philosophical approach, continue to make use of art historical terminologies embedded in what was originally a derived vision of Indian history²¹.

The temple builders of Kashmir were way ahead of their contemporaries of the plains and peninsular India. The 8th century temples of Kashmir were constructed of evenly dressed ashlar masonry. Built of mammoth boulders, the joints were put together with lime mortar, which is seen at *Wangat*, and also steel dowels, used in the Martand temples²². These engineering techniques were in vogue in the neighboring western regions of Kashmir. The people of Kashmir care nothing for archaeological research, and know little about the past glories of their nation in the old Hindu times.

Despite limited means of communication, there was interaction at the social, economic and cultural levels. The interaction in the field of architecture was quite remarkable, as it brought about a fusion. The resulting indigenous designs produced new art. Architectural projects were set amidst natural landscapes. Kashmir played an important role in understanding of art and formulating the canons for its appreciation.

The main architectural features of the temples of Kashmir can be summarized as follow:

1. The temple faces east or west.
2. The temples have straight-edged pyramidal roofs in two tiers instead of the curvilinear superstructure of the southern temples.
3. The triangular pediment enclosing trefoil niches is on all the four sides of the main shrine.
4. The Grecian pediment is very low, and its roof exceedingly flat, the Kashmirian pediment, on the contrary, is extremely lofty, and its roof is

high. The former is adapted for a sunny and almost rainless climate, while the latter is equally well suited to a rainy and snowy climate.

5. The cellular layout with the row of pillars is also of a peculiar style. In some temples, fluted pillars are found which have not been reported from anywhere else in India.
6. The double-chambered gateway matches the central shrine in scale and design.

The archaeological wealth of Kashmir was confined to the literary records centered upon Sanskrit and its ancient literature foreign travel accounts largely categorized as forgotten records²³. Much was spoken of the religious edifices of high grandeur and sanctity but in the absence of any archaeological findings these lacked chronological order. The history and civilization of ancient Kashmir was, therefore, over emphasized presenting a series of perplexing contracts and problems. The pioneer work in the rediscovery of Kashmir's past was done by the Europeans. Moorcraft and Trebeck were the first batch of intelligent observers who visited the Valley of Kashmir in 1819-1825. They were followed by G. T. Vigne²⁴ and Baron Hugel²⁵ in 1833.

A pioneer work, the first of its kind, duly illustrated by folding plates, maps, plans, elevations etc was attempted by General Cunningham in the year 1848. The work was supplemented by Rev. W. G. Cowie in the year 1866. He published further details about the temple buildings which were elaborately illustrated. Besides this, Lieutenant R. E. Cole of the central Archaeological Department visited the Valley with his staff in 1868 and made a commendable contribution by way of publishing the architectural details, plans and excellent photographs of the temples.

Hindu Shrines in the Tehsil Pulwama, Kashmir

**“Oh, virtuous, tell me how to make the image of a deity,
in order that this making may ever conform to the
canonical prescriptions.”**

- Visnudharmottara²⁶

Since the beginning of civilization, Kashmir has been the meeting place of several cultures. In the words of Kaumudi: *“Kashmir has inherited a rich cultural and literary legacy which reflects a remarkable union of different cultural and literary movements. For a long time Kashmir, along with Nalanda and Taxila, shared fame as an important seat of learning and culture in the East”*²⁷. The people of Kashmir are celebrated for their artistic skill.

The origin of civilized society originates in the villages, where people of different identities interact for mutual benefit, self sufficiency and autonomy. All villages outwardly appear to be similar but each has in its core a soul which is as distinct as one finger print from the other. There are what is called artist villages, epic villages, shrine villages, fringe villages and forsaken villages distinguished by their inhabitants and their traditions. Of these, in Kashmir the most distinctive are the Shrine villages. In every such village there is a presiding deity recognized by people of all religions on the basis of faith alone.

In tune with the other places of the Valley, the Pulwama area also abounds in archaeological remains comprising of royal palaces, Buddhist Monasteries, stone temples, Muslim shrines styled in wood and brick and the multiple faith centric springs. Though the major architectural and archaeological remains are in complete ruins but the state from the recent past has been endeavoring to undertake seriously the work of preserving these places of historical value.

Against the background of state's rich multi-cultural background and given its unique religious plurality the preservation and conservation of even less important religious structures in the shape of temples, Mosques, shrines, Sufi abodes and caves of mystic seers are of great historical significance. In the tehsil

Pulwama, the area is dotted by multiple old religious structures possessing unique architectural characteristics which need immediate documentations. In the ongoing chapter, an effort has been made to document such structures of archaeological value.

Batuknath temple and Spring-Tahab, Pulwama

Swami Batuknath²⁸ temple is situated in the village Tahab, district Pulwama. There was a spring in the village which was known as *Vatuk Nag*²⁹ and was in the custody of the Muslims. The spring was 40 feet square and Muslims of the area still call it *Vatuksar Nag*³⁰.

The temple of Batuknath is situated away from the spring within an enclosure of 60'x80'. The temple consists of a cella (*Garba Griha*) and a *Pradikshana* (circumbulatory path) covered with a conical slopping roof. In the cella is a 1.25 meters high Shivlinga. Batuknath temple is presently situated on the left side of a stream which is known by the name of Nala Lar, but before 1957 the temple was present on the right side of the *Nala*. A small Dharmashala was also attached to the temple. In 1957 the stream was heavily flooded, due to which the Hindu families of the village got completely isolated from the temple. Later on the Hindu families of the village shifted the temple on the left side of the stream.

According to Sh. Makhan Lal resident of Tahab, age about 68years old, some 115 years back in the village of Trisal was found a Shivlinga in a spring³¹. Village Trisal is one km from Tahab and is a Muslim inhabited village. Those days there was a lone Hindu family; head of the family was Pandit Gokul Nath son of Pandit Maheshwar Nath, he too shifted to Srinagar city. When the news spread about the finding of Shivlinga the villagers of Trisal came forward to acquire it but the Pandits of Tahab came in their way and there was confrontation between the villagers. Pandit Ramju of Tahab somehow brought it from the village and installed the Shivlinga in the Swami Batuknath temple.

The temple was renovated in 1982 and is under the Batuknath Mandir Committee. The Brother of Batuknath is said to be the Jagarnath Bhairav and his abode is at Achhan village, Pulwama.

The temple of Batuknath is under active worship and still some Pandit families are living in the village. Inside the temple is a Shivlinga and outside are piled up old stone images of past ages, mostly smeared over with red paint.

Jagarnath Bhairav temple, Achhan, Pulwama

Village Achhan is about seven km's from the district headquarter Pulwama on the Pulwama-Litr road. In the village is the sacred shrine of Jagarnathjee Bhairav³². The shrine complex is spread on four *kanals* of land and consists of a temple and a spring.

The temple proper consists of a curvilinear structure and enshrines a Shivlinga. In the temples (of Kashmir) the universal emblem is the phallic Linga surrounded by a stone trench, around which the worshippers circle, sprinkling water and flowers³³. Besides it in the stone lined spring was an idol of Jagarnath Bhairav in earlier times³⁴.

The temple was renovated in 1980's. Pandit Nathjee Pandita son of Pandit Dharshan Lal Pandita, resident of Achhan was the priest of temple till 1990's. Besides the daily *puja*, *bhajans* were sung on Tuesday and Saturdays.

People from far off places used to come here to perform *Razkath* (sacrifice offered to the presiding deity). One who used to marry daughter of this village was supposed to perform *Razkath* in the temple after marriage.

The temple is not at present under active worship although there are still some Pandit families³⁵ in the village who have firm faith in the shrine and decided to stay back whatever the consequences be. However, the temple is locked and Hindu families of the village are no more practicing the *puja* in the temple. There is only one idol inside the temple and that too is broken³⁶. Nenengen Nath a resident of the village, age 78 years old, narrated to the

researcher during an interview that in the temple of Jagarnathjee there were four idols. Three idols of the temple have been stolen in the past and the remaining one has broken.

Mangleshwar Bhairav Asthapan, Serun, Pulwama

The village Serun is situated at a distance of one kilometer to the south west of Pulwama town. The village is surrounded by Monghama, Pulwama, Aashmandir and Wachapora.

In the village is the Asthapan of Mangleshwar Bhairav. The Shrine has about 1½ *kanal* of land. In the shrine is a stone lined circular spring, having the diameter of thirty feet. There are four mighty *Chinar* trees and a *Bran* tree which is the sacred spot and the abode of *Mangleshwar Bhairav*. Name of the spring is *Mong-Nag*. Adjacent to the spring is a Dharmashala where many idols are kept including Shivlinga, Ganesh and photographs of gods and goddesses. In the centre of the spring is also a Shivlinga.

The Dharmashala was renovated in 1947 and a couple of rooms were added to it. Pandit Nand Lal Sharma, resident of Rohmu village used to run *Pathshala* in one of the rooms of the Dharmashala. He expired in 1980's.

Bhats, Rainas, Koul and Razdans were chief residents in the village of Serun and Mangleshwar Bhairav was the presiding deity of the whole area. The Shrine was the Centre stage of the Hindu religious activities and people used to assemble here to worship and also to greet each other on festive occasions. Hindus and Muslims equally had faith on this shrine till 1980's. The first milk of the cow was offered to the spring by both Hindus and Muslims. The situation changed after 1980's and the two communities started parting away from each other.

Mangleshwar Bhairav Asthapan Committee, Serun was taking care of the shrine till 1990. President of the committee was Pandit Dwarkanath Koul,

presently residing at Muthi, Jammu, now aged 70 and its secretary was Pandit Jagarnath Bhat presently residing at Muthi.

There are still four Hindu families left in the village Serun and in one of the Dharmashalas of the temple; a contingent of J&K police is stationed.

The Muslim residents of the village believe that when Shah-i-Hamadan^{RA} came Kashmir for spreading the message of Islam, he also visited the village of Sirun. In the village, the horse of Shah-i-Hamadan^{RA} had felt thirst. On feeling thirst the horse rugged with his feet and water came out from the spot and it took the shape of a spring (*Nag*). The spring at present times is in control of Hindus of the village and Kashmir police has been stationed there to protect the spring from encroachment. Because of this dispute, the relation between the two communities is not as good as found in other villages of Kashmir. Besides this, in village *Monghama*, which is adjacent to village Serun, Shah-i-Hamadan^{RA} is said to have remained for a short time. The Muslims of the village told to the researcher that Shah-i-Hamadan^{RA} had offered a prayer (*Namaz*) on a stone at the village which has been preserved by the Muslims of the village³⁷.

Payer/Payech Temple

Payer is a small village in the *cherat pargana*, situated on the banks of a stream at the foot of the west side and towards the southern extremity of the elevated table-land called the *Nonagar wudar* or *karewa*, it lies about 11 miles south of pampore by a good road, and about the same distance north east of Shopian³⁸. The name payech, which has obtained currency through Vigne and Cunningham is not known locally³⁹. Payech nestles under a bluff and is far away from the high-road⁴⁰.

The sloping knoll on which it stands, the cool shade of walnut trees close by, the glimpses of a village seen through the trees behind and cheerful brook running at the foot of the slope, form a charming setting to a building which would be dwarfed by a scenery of a grander scale⁴¹. On the southern side of this

village, is situated in a small green space near the bank of a stream, an ancient temple which, in intrinsic beauty and elegance of outline, is superior to all the existing remains in Kashmir of similar dimensions. The temple is by far the best preserved example of a medieval Kashmir shrine⁴². Its excellent preservation is due its retired situation and the marvelous solidity of its construction. The cella, which is eight feet square and has an open doorway on each of the four sides, is composed of only ten stones, the four corners being each a single stone; the sculptured tympanums over the doorways being four others; while two more compose the pyramidal roof, the lower of these being an enormous mass eight feet square by four feet in height⁴³. The latter are occupied by flowers but the projecting ends are curved into three up right mouldings slightly rounded at the top and surrounded by a straight and horizontal band. *"In the interior the walls are plain, but the roof is hollowed out into a hemispherical dome of which the centre is decorated by an expanded lotus flower. The lower edge of the dome is ornamented by three straight-edged fillets and by a beaded circle. The spandrels are filled by single undraped and winged figures (of rather spirited execution), who with outstretched arms and legs appear to be supporting the roof... They are probably Yakhshas. The dome itself rest upon the cornice, which is formed of six plain straight-lined mouldings"*⁴⁴. The ceiling of the Pandrethan temple is a copy of this on a large scale. The cult image of the temple is a Shivlinga, which has an octagonal base. However, the most conspicuous monument that attracts the attention of a visitor on reaching Pulwama is the ancient temple of Payer.

It will be observed that the roof has been partly displaced, which is said have been the result of an attempt made by the Pathans to take it down and remove it to the city⁴⁵. But, however, the displacement may possibly have been due to an earth-quake, as the temple is not so big as to have withstood demolition by the Pathans or others⁴⁶. The interior of the temple is still occupied by a large stone lingam and from the water drain and the bulls carved on the smaller plasters of the doorways it is evident that this was the original intention.

There is use of dry masonry in the construction of the temple. The land under the temple is about seven *Marlas*. Payer temple in earlier times was

locally known by the name of 'Nangiraz'⁴⁷. There is a legend in circulation⁴⁸ that in village Payer there were seven Hindu temples but all of them except the surviving temple had been destroyed by Pathans. The legend goes that when the Pathans came in the village to raze all the seven temples of the village to dust, they kept an old woman on nearby karewa (*wudar*) to keep a vigil on the attack of enemies from that side⁴⁹. The old woman fell asleep and the drum fell down from the top of the karewa. As it created a noise, Pathans thought that enemies had come and so they left their work unfinished⁵⁰. The monument has been declared to be of National importance under the ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958 (241958). Besides the areas up to 100 meters from protected monument and further beyond it up to 200 meters near or adjoining this monument has been declared to be prohibited.

It is noteworthy to mention here that the people of Payer are usually known as *Bands*. The Minstrels of Kashmir (*Bhaggat or Band*) could be recognized by their long black hair and stroller mien and although they were practically a peculiar people so far as marriage goes, they sometimes would recruit their companies by enlisting a villager⁵¹. They combined the profession of singing and acting with that of begging, and were the great wanderers. The researcher will conclude by quoting a famous proverb about village Payer, which Says:

*Aab saff zuan yach*⁵².

Water (in village Payer) is clean and vision (of the people of village Payer) is very sharp.

Archaeological importance of village Muchpuna

Village Muchpuna, according to archaeological sources, was an important centre of Hinduism because of the fact that quite recently a spring was dug from where an idol had been recovered⁵³. Hinduism faded away from the village in the late fourteenth century and the credit for converting the inhabitants of the village into the fold of Islam goes to a famous Sufi saint whose name is

Rukhnudian Bagdadi^{RA54}. This Sufi saint played an important role not only in bringing the people of the village to the fold of Islam but also of the surrounding villages such as *Mugalpora, Payer, Malpora, Nawhard, Koil* etc⁵⁵. Another attendant fact regarding the village is that in earlier time there were number of springs in the village.

Brarimaej Mander at village Murran

A remarkable feature of the origin of the land and people of Kashmir is the legends in which they are woven. But what is remarkable is that the conclusions drawn from them stand modern scientific tests converting the legends into geological facts⁵⁶. To trace the history of Murran temple, one has to take into cognizance a legendary account of Pandit Bhawani Bhat, (1765-1835) who lived at Sumbal⁵⁷. It was a flood-prone area. Divine Mother appeared to in a dream on *Magh Ashtami* night and suggested him to move to a new place, to end their hardships. She, however, warned him that his eighth generation would not be able to stay at the new place. The following morning quite early, a Cat entered his compound. Bhawani Bhat followed the Divine Cat. The latter disappeared at a place, where a spring emerged. It was subsequently expanded by laying a single stone (*Paater Kein*) and a beautiful temple was built on the spot. The temple was named as Brarimaej (*Cat Mother*). Temple was constructed in 1847 and the icon of the Divine Mother was installed in 1849 under the supervision of Shri Loker Bhat dated 19-1-1876. The temple was renovated in 1978. The great sanctity of this shrine of *Mother Sharika* brought well-known saints from Kashmir and outside – Ramji and Madhavan to this place. Many people have experienced miracles here. All this has been recorded at length. Another folk belief with regard to *Brarimaej Mander* is that the word *Brarimaej* has been evolved from two words “*Batarka*” and “*Maej*”, while the former means goddess in Sanskrit, later means mother. Therefore *Brarimaej* means Mother goddess⁵⁸. According to the old faith of the Kashmiris Mother goddess manifested Herself in various forms or features of nature such as springs and rivers which were especially worshipped because of the reverence towards

Mother goddess. According to this folk belief in village Murran Mother goddess manifested Herself in the form of a spring and a temple has been built on the top side of the spring which is known by the name of *Brarimaej Mander*.

Historically important sites of village Murran are discussed below⁵⁹:

Maisumthur:- This is an ancient site which was sacred to the guardian of the village Murran. The name *Maisumthur* has been derived from Makshika-Swamin. There were many temples sacred to Shiva and Buddha in the later times (some 2000 years back). Big stones of the temples have been found at the site and some statues of Siva and Buddha also have been found. Remains of an ancient temple at *Maisumthur* could be seen till 1950. Bereft of the sense of preserving heritage, the locals of village Murran took away the slabs of the temple to lay out pavements.

Mushteng:- *Tengs* or mounds are found in many villages in the valley of Kashmir. We find *Tengs* not only in village Murran but also in other villages, such as – *Tengpuna, Karimabad* etc. It is a fact that these *Tengs* or mounds have been sites of ancient settlements which were destroyed either by natural calamities or by warring tribes. Similarly *Mushteng*, the old Mahesh Teng was a mound, where in old days *Shivratri* rituals were performed. The water of *Anzgan* spring was believed to come Charar-i-Sharif. *Kashir Nag*, located half a kilometer from Murran is a sulphur spring. *Boni Bagh and Chann Masjid* were part of the social life of Murran.

Bhawan:- Bhawan (*Skt. Bhavana*), which is located almost in the middle of the village, used to be a large spring, within which water gushed out at two spots. One of the oozing spots was called ‘*Visnupad*’ (foot of Visnu) and the other *Ganga*. A myth prevalent here says five rivers used to flow underneath ‘*Bawan*’. Another legend says in old times the pots required for any function used to come out of *Bawan*, after recitation of some *shlokas*. The tenth day *Kriya* of the deceased was performed on the bank of this spring. The “*Doonparinujan*” (the traditional worship of walnuts) was also performed here. Pandits used to clean the spring every year with the onset of spring. In 1978 the spring was filled with

earth. A Sufi saint Mir Syed Hussain Indrabi^{RA} came to settle there. A mosque, named as Baabhaji Mosque was built here in 1979. The filled up *Bawan* is a part of this complex now.

Miniature Temple At village Koil

“Of all the arts”, observes Percy Brown, “practiced by the people of the Valley in the pre – Islamic period, the building art was one in which they were notably proficient, as the remains of their large monuments in stone are a standing proof”⁶⁰. That the style which culminated in such masterpieces of architecture as Martand, Awantipura, Payer, Koil, must have had a long history of development, goes without saying. And that it was a product of influences from different Classical schools is evident from the trefoil and the horseshoe arches, and from the fluted pillars.

Koil, a small village in the Valley of Kashmir, about five miles south west of Awantipora, and a mile north east of Payech⁶¹. At Koil, there is a miniature temple cut out of one single stone. The interior of the temple is a cube of fifteen inches with the centre of the roof hollowed out into a dome, and the walls are five inches thick. The temple has only one entrance. On the three sides there are closed doorways with pediments like that of entrance. The pediment is unbroken and contains the trefoil ornament. The basement of the temple and the upper division of the roof are not found. There are the bases of three small columns eight inches in diameter. At the bases, the plinth is seven inches high and 11- ¼ inches wide.

In the middle of each of the other three sides of the wall within the enclosure there is a blank arched recess, and on the north side there is also a small square postern measuring about three feet by two feet and a similar one on the west side seems to have led into a square chamber which occupied the south western corner of the enclosure; this chamber having been lighted by a small arched window⁶². Projecting into the enclosure from the southern wall is a small cell about five feet square, with a pyramidal roof.

The cella of the temple, which occupies the centre of the enclosure, is similar in general appearance to those of Payar and Pandrenthan, but more imposing in its proportions and more elaborate in its details. Each side measures about fifteen feet above the plinth. The porch, which is on the west side, projects rather more than three feet from the face of wall.

In the middle of each of the other three sides is a blank trefoil archway corresponding in proportion to the portal. Of either side of the vestibule the figure of a deity is carved in bold relief on the panel contained within a trefoil arched recess.

The inner entrance is a square gateway about 6-½ feet high by 3-½ feet wide supported by pillars; both this and the middle gateway of the north seem to have been fitted with stone doors. The inner chamber is about 8-½ feet square; the walls are blank, with the exception of a small arched recess on the south side of the entrance. The floor is of stone. This roof less and half buried ruined temple resembling that in the *Manas Bal Lake*⁶³. However, there is a wise old saying that traditions never die and the same is true about architectural traditions of Kashmir.

Cave At Village Ramu

The cave of village Ramu is situated on the karewa which is about 1 ½ miles north east of the village. The entrance to the cavern is carved with an architectural doorway⁶⁴ and a gloomy passage⁶⁵. It is oval in shape, 6 ½ feet high and 3 ½ feet wide. The cave penetrates the karewa in an easterly direction and may be traversed for about ten miles. About ten feet from the entrance, there is a small circular chamber on northern side of the cave. According to the folk belief, Hazrat Rumi Rishi^{RA} used to practice austere penances in the cave. The people of village Ramu and even people of the surrounding villages are of the opinion that the Rishi not only performed penances in the cave but he is also enshrined in the cave. It is said that Rumi Rishi^{RA} lived a life of three hundred years and after every one hundred years new teeth of the Rishi sprouted⁶⁶. When Kashmir was

ruled by Raja Jagdeva (1198-1212 A.D.), Rumi Rishi^{RA} entered the cave for ever⁶⁷. The people of the village have a great reverence for the cave.

Pingala Devi Temple at village Pinglena

Village Pinglena has been an ancient site of goddess Pingala. The village is named as Pinglana after the temple which is dedicated to Pingla Devi who in local belief system is the deity enshrined in the human body is the source of energy and the power of digesting food. The popular belief holds that Pinglana exists as Pinglana Nadi who is the power of digesting food. Pingala is called Surya Nadi (Sun). It flows through the right nostril. It has heating effect. It is fiery red and the power of consummation. In microcosm it is the power of digesting food. Pingala is Rudra Rupa Sakti. Pingala and Ida are subtle Nadis that carry the Suksmaprana and is the nourishing power. In the physical body these tentatively correspond to the right and the left sympathetic chains. Ida is called Chandra Nadi (moon) and is of cooling effect. It is pale and great nourisher of the world. Ida is Saktiruda Sakti. However, starting from right and left testicles respectively, Ida and Pingala meet Susumna Nadi at the junction called Muladhara Granthi, the knot of Brahma. Again these meet at Anahata and Ajna Cakras where the junctions are called Vishnu Granthi and Rudra Granthi respectively. Finally Ida flows through the left nostril and Pingala through the right nostril. Ida and Pingala Nadis indicate time and Susumna swallows time.

Caves At Village Koil

The two caves of village Koil are situated on the karewa⁶⁸ which is about one mile south east of the village. The entrance to the caverns is carved with simple architectural doorways⁶⁹ and gloomy passages. Both the caves are oval in shape, about 4 ½ feet high and 3 ½ feet wide. The caves have been over shaded by three *Brimij*⁷⁰ trees. The caves penetrate the karewa in westerly direction and may be traversed for about fifteen to twenty feet. In cave first about six feet from the entrance, there is a small circular chamber on western side of the cave⁷¹.

According to the folk belief, Baba Rishi^{RA} observed austere penances in the caves for about twelve years. The people of the village not only tried to preserve these two caves but also built a shrine in the memory of Sheikh-ul-Alam Sheik Nordini Noorani^{RA}, which is about fifteen feet east of the caves. Most of the people of the village are of the opinion that first cave leads from the village to Chhrar Sharif, while the second cave ends in Ashmuqam. Some people of the village say the caves are interminable. It is noteworthy to mention here that all those persons of the village, who are following either the ideology of *Jamat-i-Islami* or *Ahil-i-Hadees*, deny the legend. Near about half of the population of village Koil belongs to the ideology of *Jamat-i-Islami* and one third are the followers of the ideology of *Ahil-i-Hadees*.

History of Gurudwara Shri Hargobind Sahib Ji at Shadimarg

A brief history of Gurudwara of Shadimarg and of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji's journey from Shadimarg to Srinagar is as follows⁷²:

Near about 1616 A.D. Shri Hargobind Sahib Ji (1595-1664) came Shadimarg on his Kashmir tour. While Guru Hargobind was here *Badshah* Jahangir also came here. He met the Guru and both had good understanding with each other. Both of them went for hunting. When they were hunting in Yarwan Forest, King Jahangir felt thirsty and requested Shri Hargobind Sahib Ji for water. Shri Hargobind Sahib Ji replied that no water was available in the *Jungle*, to which Jahangir asked that if Guru Nanak Dev could quench the thirst of Fakir at Madina then why not his request could be fulfilled.

On hearing this, Shri Hargobind Sahib Ji hit his *Neza* (spear) on ground and water erupted so that King Jahangir could quench his thirst. The spring is named Gobind Sar and still exists at about five kilometers from Gurudwara in the Yarwan Forest. After this Shri Hargobind Sahib Ji came back to Gurudwara and tied his horse to an old and dried *chinar* tree, which suddenly turned green due his miraculous powers.

Shri Hargobind Sahib Ji stayed in Shadimarg for fourteen days, during this period Fakir Katushah became his disciple. When Sikhs learned about Shri Hargobind Sahib's visit to Shadimarg they came to visit Guruji and brought offerings in the form of fruits and honey. By that time Guruji had moved via Khampora Sarai to *Kathi Darwaza* in Srinagar.

In the mean time the devotees reached Shri Hargobind Sahib Ji and offered fruits and honey. On opening the utensils, devotees noticed that the utensil was full of insects. Shri Hargobind Sahib asked the devotees whether any one asked for this honey. Devotees replied that Fakir Katushah had asked for the honey which the devotees refused as it was for their Guruji. Shri Hargobind Ji then ordered devotees to go back to Shadimarg and offer the honey to Fakir Katushah as he was his disciple (he died in year 1620).

Shri Hargobind Sahib reached Kathi Darwaza in Srinagar via Shadimarg as Mata Pagpari was waiting for him. She had prepared woolen shawl with her own hands for Guruji and wanted to offer it to him, herself. When Shri Hargobind Sahib reached Srinagar she could only hear the foot sounds of his horse approaching, as she was blind. On noticing this Shri Hargobind Sahib once again hit *Neza* (spear) on ground and water erupted, a few drops of which fell on the eyes of Mata Pagpari and she regained her eye sight. Mata Pagpari finally could present her offerings to Shri Hargobind. When Shri Hargobind Sahib was about to leave, Mata Pagpari made her last wish that her last rites should be conducted by Guru Hargobind which he agreed and carried out her last rites.

Moreover, it is more than four hundred nine years since Guru Hargobind visited Shadimarg. New building of Gurudwara was constructed by Baba Harbans Singh and Bangla Sahib, New Delhi, which was carried out on 27 August 2008.

Inspite being a small village, Shadimarg has a greater historical significance. The rich soil of Shadimarg has seen a glorious past and has preserved remains of its past, in the shape of the famous Shadimarg Mughal Sarai, Gurduwara of Guru Hargobind and in the shape of graveyard of the

Martyrs of battle which took between Mughal ruler Akbar and Yusuf Shah Chak of Kashmir. The soil of Shadimarg has also served as a seat of mysticism and nourished the mystics like Baba Razzaq and Kuta Shah.

The Mughal Road still has several monuments like remnants of fortified Mughal inns that reflect the glorious days of these places when they served as camping sites for royal Mughal caravans and their armies while heading towards the Kashmir Valley four centuries ago. One such monument is the Shadimarg *Sarai* (inn) that was built by Emperor Jahangir in the early part of the seventeenth century, and served as an important stopover for travelers, like other *Sarais* viz., *Khampora Sarai*, *Sukha Sarai* and *Rambagh Sarai* etc. on the Mughal road. The *Sarai* was built on a plateau, not very high and is about one hundred twenty meters in length and about sixty five meters in breadth. There is a lofty wall of about twelve feet high all around the *Sarai* with two big gateways on east and west sides respectively. On inner side there were numerous rooms all around. There is also a *Masjid* in close association of the *Sarai*, which is still known by the name of *Padshah Masheed*.

This beautiful historical monument which is our cultural heritage lies at the edge of the village. It needs proper care and preservation for its survival. But unfortunately, the *Sarai* is a glaring example of vandalized and abandoned heritage.

However, Tourism Department officials in Jammu and Kashmir plan to renovate heritage structures and monuments dotting the famous Mughal Road to promote heritage tourism. “*We want to tell the government that this (inn) should be repaired. It should be renovated. It should be repaired so that tourists can visit it,*” said Rangil Singh, a local resident.

“It is a historical route. These inns are assets on the route. Whosoever travels on this route would like to visit these inns too. The Shadimarg Sarai is not the only inn. There are many inns on the route. There are many small structures on the

route that we will have to repair and maintain to promote cultural tourism,” said Qadri⁷³.

The government has conducted surveys and plans to restore the glory of the historical road and monuments and heritage structures along it to attract tourists.

The 84-kilometer-long road, which is Kashmir's shortest link to the rest of the country, is now being reopened and projected as a modern engineering marvel. Once completed, it will again link Kashmir's summer capital Srinagar to the districts of Poonch and Rajouri. It passes over the Pir Panjal mountain range at an altitude of 11,500 feet.

The Mughal dynasty's third emperor, Akbar the Great, used the Mughal Road to conquer Kashmir in 1586. Emperor Jahangir, Akbar's son, died on this road at the *Chingus Sarai* near Rajouri while returning from Kashmir.

Cave at village Rajpora

The cave of village Rajpora is situated on the karewa which is situated to the south west of the village. The cave is known by the name of '*Bab Guf*'. It is said that Baba Naseeb-u-din Ghazi^{RA} meditated in the cave for the attainment of spiritual attainment⁷⁴. Here it is noteworthy to mention that the mausoleum of Baba Naseeb-u-din Ghazi^{RA}, is situated in Bijbihara in Baba Mohalla at the banks of the River *Jhelum*, forty seven kilometers from Srinagar in South Kashmir. Baba Naseeb-u-din Ghazi^{RA} was born in Sialkote (now in Pakistan) in 1569A. D. He came to Kashmir along with his parents in search of spiritual enlightenment and became a disciple of Baba Dawood Khaki who himself was a great scholar and follower of the exalted spiritual personality of Kashmir⁷⁵, Hazrat Syed Sheikh Hamza popularly known as Makdum Sahib. Baba Naseeb-u-din Ghazi^{RA} is credited with construction of as many as twelve hundred mosques at different places in the Valley and it is said that he laid the foundation of two mosques in village Rajpora also. The cave is situated on a karewa which is about sixty feet above the ground level. The villagers have closed the cave in recent

past because it was in abandoned and dying condition. According to folk belief the cave extends from Rajpora and ends in Chrar-i-Sharif.

Tehsil Pulwama thus abounds in ruins and remnants which are a source of inspiration for its songs and legends. All archaeological edifices preserve in themselves a basic concept of imagination and for the attainment of the real value and worth of this imagination in concrete terms. However, Jammu and Kashmir Assembly has passed a heritage conservation law in May 2010 aiming at addressing the issues pertaining to culture and heritage. The real challenge for the State lies in resisting the temptation of resorting to cosmetic and populist measures, and instead sourcing expertise and inhabiting a process by mainstreaming heritage as a planned tool. This needs determined efforts by the stakeholders including citizenry for developing a proper understanding of the process, methods and outcomes.

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20. For an excellent recent study, see Devangana Desai, *The Religious Imagery of Khajuraho* (Bombay, 1996).
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24. Vigne being an artist recorded the drawings of the monumental buildings with accuracy.

25. Hogle too in his report brought to the notice of the public the talent the artists had exhibited in the construction of these buildings.
26. Shankalia, H. D. 'New Evidence for Early man in Kashmir' *Current Anthropology*, vol. 12, No's 4 and 5, 1971, pp. 538-61; Prehistory and Proto history of India and Pakistan, Poona, 2nd ed. 1974.
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28. However, during the interview on 22-06-2011, with the Hindu inhabitants of village Tahab namely Makhan Lal, retired engineer PDD, age about 68 years old; M. L. Tikku, retired telegram service officer, age about 64 years old; Surindar Krishan Koul, retired Military Engineering Service employee, age about 62 years old have revealed the name of the temple as *Swami Wataknath* temple.
29. *Vatsar Nag* is situated in the Pandit Mohalla of the village.
30. Makhan Lal (retired Engineer P. D. D., 65 years old) during an interview with the researcher revealed the name of spring as 'Watser nag' instead of 'Watak nag'.
31. Shivlinga was found in a spring in field (*kha*) of *Nahra Chak* of village Trisal. Virendra Bangroo, Documentation Officer, Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Janpath, New Delhi, named the field as *Kaed Chak*.
Source: Kashmir Sentinel.
32. The temple is situated on the eastern side of a nearby stream. The stream is known by the name of '*Budhi bal Kail*'.
33. Lawrence, Walter R., *The Valley of Kashmir*, op. cit., p. 297.
34. The spring which is present nearby the temple has decrepit and the idol of *Jagarnath Bhairav* is no more there in the spring at present time.
35. At present there are only two Hindu families in the entire village of Achhan, one is of Nenengen Nath and second is of Kashi Nath.
36. The broken idol is of Shivlinga.
37. An *Asthan-i- Sharif* has been built in the village in which no Muslim saint is enshrined but only the sacred stone has been kept there.

38. Gazetteer for Kashmir and Ladakh, compiled under the Direction of the Quarter Master General in India in the Intelligence Branch, p. 661. .
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47. The temple now-a-days is also known by the villagers by the name of 'Khandar'.
48. Information based on the interview with many villagers of Payer on 12-07-2011, namely Abdul Rahim Khan age above 100 years; Mohammad Abdullah, age about 86 years; Ghulam Mohammad Mir, who is at present time Imam of a *Masjid* in the village age about 67 years.
49. According to folk belief, an old woman was kept on nearby karewa with a drum. She was advised by the *Pathans* to beat the drum if enemies came to attack them.
50. When the drum fell down, at that time, the *Pathans* had razed down six out of seven temples. Now they were trying to pull down the present temple, which is ascertained by the fact that the roof of the temple has been partly displaced.
51. Lawrence, Walter R., *The Valley of Kashmir*, op. cit., p. 312.
52. Information based on the interview on 24-07-2011, with Abdul Gani Mir aged about 60 years; Abdul Rahim Khan, age above 100 years; Mohammad Aslam Mir, age about 57 years; Mohammad Abdullah, age about 86 years; Gh. Mohammad Mir, who is at present time Imam of a *Masjid* in the village, age about 67 years; Manzoor Ahmad Mir and many

other villagers.

53. According to the folk belief Rukhnudin Bagdadi^{RA}, who came Kashmir from Bagdad was a disciple of Amir-i-Kabir^{RA}.
54. Although the saint had responsibility of spreading the message of Islam in different villages but main centre of his activities was Village Muchpuna. And the saint is enshrined in the village.
55. Lawrence, Walter R., *The Valley of Kashmir*, op. cit., p. 294.
56. Bamzai, Anand Koul, *Cultural And Political History of Kashmir*, Gulshan Books, New Delhi, vol. I, p. 65.
57. The main Bhat clan originally lived at Sumal, a beautiful village in north Kashmir was the birth place of the great-grand ancestors of the Bhat dynasty.
58. Stein, M. A., *Kalhana's Rajatarangini*, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 278-279.
59. The legends and stories about the historically important sites of village Murran has been narrated to the researcher by Hindu inhabitants of village Murran viz; Bhadri Nath, principal of *Radiant* private school age about 65 years old; Rathin Lal, a Medical shopkeeper, age about 64 years old etc.
60. Brown, Percy Indian Architecture (Islamic Period), Calcutta 1942 p. 154. As cited by Bamzai, Pritvi Nath Koul, *A History of Kashmir*, Metropolitan Book Co., (Pvt.) Ltd. New Delhi, p. 288.
61. Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, compiled under the Direction of the Quarter Master General in India in the Intelligence Branch, p. 509.
62. Koul, Pandit Anand, *Archaeological Remains in Kashmir*, op. cit., p. 73.
63. Gazetteer of Kashmir and Ladakh, compiled under the Direction of the Quarter Master General in India in the Intelligence Branch, op. cit., p. 509.
64. The doorway of the cave is plastered thinly with cement.
65. Most of the villagers of Ramu hold the view that the cave leads from the village to village Char-i-sharief, which is of about ten miles passage, while some persons of the village believe the cave to be interminable.

66. Tahiri, Peerzada Abdul Khaliq, *Tazkiri Auliyai Kashmir*, Srinagar: Gulshan Publishers, vol. I. p. 498.
67. Ibid.
68. There is also a government higher secondary on the karewa, which is situated about fifty meters east of the caves.
69. The doorways of the caves are of wood and they are covered by sun backed bricks.
70. The *brimij* is usually found in graveyards and in the vicinity of shrines, where it sometimes grows to a magnificent tree. When *brimij* can be obtained from places not consecrated it is always used for the yokes (*yiput*) of plough cattle, as it is soft, cool wood.
71. Abdul Samad Gauri , was the person of the village who used to spend most of his time in this circular chamber of the cave for practicing penance. He is now no more in the world. He has died some 25 years back, when he was about 90 years old.
72. The history of Gurudwara and of Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji's visit from Shadimarg to Srinagar is based on the information of interview with Sikh inhabitants of the village on 27-07-2011, namely Surinder Singh, head Granthi age 52 years; Nitu Singh, Granthi, age 43 years; Jasbir Singh, Shopkeeper, age 35years; Sukpal Singh, age 47 years; Dhara Singh, presently working in Agriculture department age 48 years. The same story has been written down on a board which is present in front of the Gurudwara.
73. Khurshid Qadri, an official of the state Archaeology and Archives Department, said renovation and restoration work would commence soon.
74. During the interview the researcher found that some inhabitants of village Rajpora are of the opinion that Baba Naseeb-u-din Gazi RA stayed in the cave for seven years namely Mohammad Amin Sahab, Imam Jamai Masjid Rajpora age about 80 years; Abdul Rashid Shah age about 56 years; Some people of the village are holding the view that the Baba meditated in the cave for twelve years viz., Haji Syed Mohammad Asan,

retired Persian lecturer age about 72 years; etc.

75. Tahiri, Peerzada Abdul Khaliq, *Tazkiri Auliyai Kashmir*, op. cit., vol. II.
p. 160.

Mahjoor

Mahjoor



Ghulam Ahmad Mahjoor

Born	September 3, 1885 Mitrigam, Jammu & Kashmir
Died	April 9, 1952 (aged 66)
Occupation	<i>Patwari</i> (village revenue clerk), Poet
Nationality	Indian
Ethnicity	Kashmiri



Mangleshure Temple at village Tahab, Pulwama.



Curious stone miniatures outside the Temple.



Temple at village Achhan, Pulwama.



Shivlingam at village Serun, Pulwama.



**Stone on which Sha-i-Hamadan^{RA} is believed to have
prayed in village Monghama, Pulwama.**



Temple at village Payer, Pulwama.



Brarimaej Mandir at village Murran, Pulwama.



Photograph of some ancient remnants, found at Murran, Pulwama.



Cave dwelling, Interior view, Ramu, Pulwama.



Pingla Devi Temple at village Piglena, Pulwama.



Cave dwellings, Interior view, Koil, Pulwama.



Gurudwara at village Shadimarg, Pulwama.



Mughal *sarais* at village Shadimarg, Pulwama.
(A glaring example of vandalized and abandoned heritage).



Site of Cave at village Rajpora, Pulwama.



**Interview with Abdul Rahim Khan, at Payer,
Pulwama.**

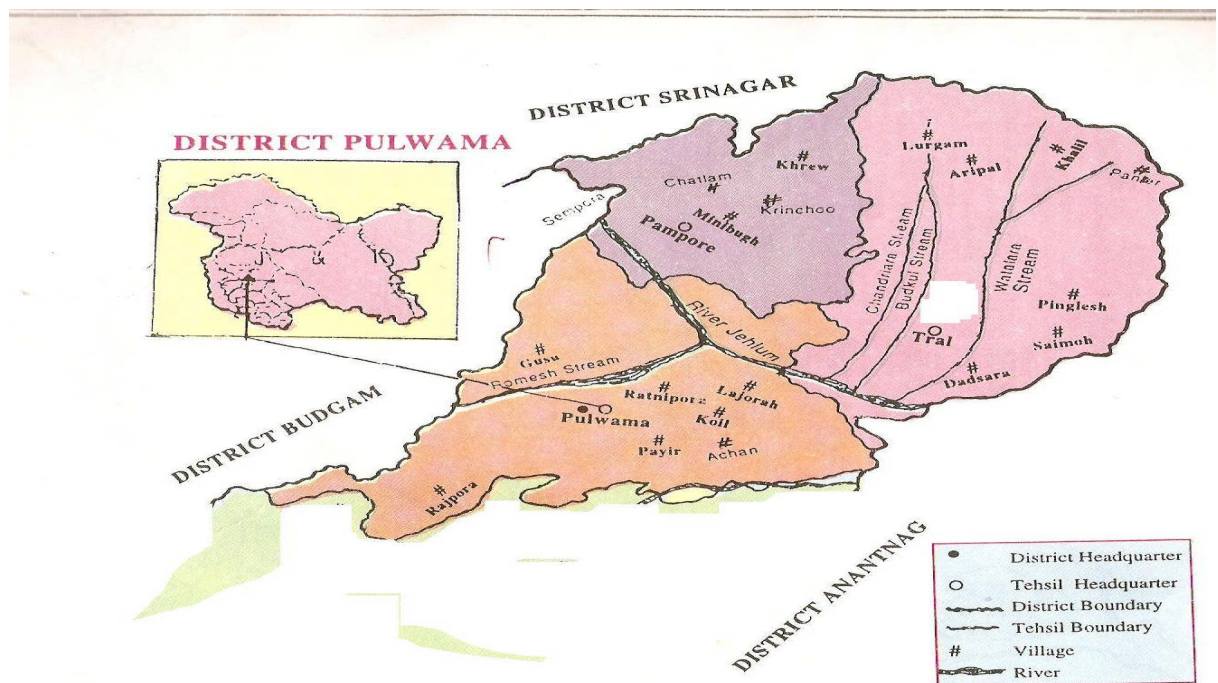


Interview with Makhan Lal, at village Tahab, Pulwama.



Shrine of Syed Qasim Ahmad Andrabi^{RA} at village Puchal, Pulwama.

Location of Pulwama in Jammu and Kashmir





CONCLUSION

Conclusion

The widening of the historiographical canvass has entailed all out search for sources particularly the non-conventional sources which are supposed to be less biased and genuine remnants of undocumented past. These sources become more relevant and meaningful in reconstructing particularly less explored regional histories and relatively smaller cultural mosaics in a given micro-geographical region making it a prism to look at macro-history through micro-history. In the array of these non-conventional sources, place names and folklore are of perennial importance. The oral tradition leads to a nuanced understanding of the total history for which tools like field survey and interviews are very important. Much is revealed by the systematic and scientific study of place names that mostly sprout out of folklore and popular memory. The harnessing of these allied folk tales, legends and popular myths, when scrutinized historically unravel the successive political, socio-cultural and economic changes. The veracity of folk versions and tales associated with the place names is fascinatingly established by the revenue records wherein mostly the same version is provided as *Wajah Tasmae* or reason for naming of the place. Besides the mass of place names get equal substantiation from the established discipline of history in general and archaeology in particular that investigates the surviving cultural artifacts and bio-facts for meaningful reconstruction of the past. The symphony of these mentioned non-conventional sources and conventional archaeology offer a sound methodology for exploring past and reconstructing it in an objective fashion.

Keeping in view the promising methodological approach the study in hand evaluates the place names, oral history and remains of tehsil Pulwama which lead to certain important conclusions. District Pulwama being one the most important places of the scenic Valley of Kashmir is historically rich and informationally promising. For the micro-analysis only the villages of tehsil Pulwama have been selected for gleaning uniform patterns of christening the places and treasure of oral history and archaeological monuments available throughout the Valley.

Throughout Kashmir and tehsil Pulwama in particular, place names show some major themes of the Valley's religious history. They reflect the changing religious faiths of Kashmiris, the strong presence of Naga cult and Buddhism at a certain stage of its history and the dominance of Brahmanic religion on the eve of advent of Islam, the existence of different religious cults among the Hindus, social segregation on the basis of ethnicity, caste and professional basis, localization and even sub-localization of the sacred *tirthtas*, linkages between land endowments, agrarian expansion and religious changes, influx of foreign cultures and their impact on Kashmir, accommodation and adjustment policy followed by rulers.

Although the archaeological and literary sources testify to the changing religious history of Kashmir, the place names not only corroborate it but also provide an enduring evidence of its intensity. The fact that Naga worship was a popular belief of ancient Kashmir has been kept alive by the name with which the springs are called in Kashmir. Since it was a popular belief that the sources of water particularly of the springs, are the abodes of tutelary deities who manifest themselves in the form of snakes, the springs in Kashmir came to be called by the generic term *Nag*, meaning serpent in Sanskrit. This is corroborated by the continuity of the names with which some springs of Kashmir come down to the present times, for example, *Nila Nag*, *Sesh Nag*, *Veeri Nag*, *Konsar Nag*, *Vechar Nag*, *Sukh Nag*, *Susram Nag*, *Kani Nag*, *Chanwun Nag*, *Mongi Nag*, *Wuwit Nag*, *Bad Nag*, *Kani Nag* etc.

The prevalence of Buddhism in Kashmir for a long period of time is an established fact. The place names, however, indicate the institutional foundations of its mass basis. That the Buddhists established a network of *sangramas* (monasteries), *viharas* and *bhavanas* throughout the Valley can be traced to the present day in the designation of villages and city quarters as they left their names to the sites at which they were erected. Thus there are many villages in Kashmir known as *Sangram*. And all those villages and *Muhallas* which have the suffix *vihara* or *bhavana*, formed the centers of Buddhism. It may be mentioned that there is a considerable number of villages and *Muhallas* whose

names have the suffix *vor*. Whether *vor* is the Kashmirized version of *vihara* or *isvara* is open for debate and discussion. Also the names of a number of villages and *Muhallas* continue to have *bhavan* as their suffix.

While the Naga cult and Buddhism remained successively the main faiths of Kashmir before the sixth century A. D. the religious pantheon was enriched by successive immigrations by Parthians, Greeks, and even Jews. Thus many places were named after Greek gods and goddesses like Odur from Edessa, Sotur from Soteria, Midur from Modura, Romuh from Roma, Solum from Sileina etc. Similarly places having '*bal*' as suffixes were Jewish settlements such as Ganderbal, Ganeshbal, Darbal, Kondbal, Nadibal, Gangabal, Sumbal etc. The term '*bal*' is a Hebrew word which means settlement. The Saiva and Viasnava Brahmanism dominated the religious scene of Kashmir from sixth century till fourteenth century. The predominance of Brahmanism in Kashmir on the eve of advent of Islam is attested most tangibly by the place names. The majority of the villages and *Muhallas* are either named after the Saiva and Vaisnava rulers of Kashmir or after a Hindu god or goddess or their incarnations or the Brahmanic religious institutions. Of the first category of villages of tehsil Pulwama mention may be made of Chakur (Cakrapura founded by Cakramardika, the wife of King Lalitaditya), Chandargam (Chandragrama), Dadoora (founded after the name of goddess Devi), Gudar (village founded by Godhara), Kalampora (Kalyanapura founded by Kalyanadevi), Murran (founded by Raja Moore), Pinglena (named after the Hindu goddess Pingla devi), Ratanpur (founded by Ratnadevi), etc. A large number of villages of tehsil Pulwama are known either after the deities of the Brahmanic pantheon or their incarnations or the Brahmanic religious institutions or the Brahmanic sacred sites. For instance, Harpora, Indar, Mitargom (Skt. Matragrama), Shankarpor etc. Similarly all those villages of Kashmir whose names have the suffix of *isa*, *isvara*, *swamin*, *mar*, *hom*, *ham* and *vor* were important centers of Brahmanic religion. The domination of Brahmanism is also clear from the fact that even to the present day the local nomenclature of Kashmir shows Sanskrit character. This is most clearly illustrated by the constant recurrence of such terms as – *pur* or *por* (*pura*), *gam* or *gom* (*grama*) besides *ham*, *hom* or *vor* in village names. In the area of study

such type of villages include Barpor, Shangarpor, Shankarpor, Kamrazipor, Chadipor, Shatherpor, Monghom, Mitrigom, Pahalgom etc.

As the Muslim rulers never tried to rename these places especially in rural Kashmir which signify the spread of Islam was gradual and accommodative in nature. Besides the religious affiliations of the places, the important sources of nomenclature is the inhabitation of certain kram, craft or occupational groups thus we have Awanpor (Yavanapura, the place of Yavanas, Bhuttapor (the habitation of Bhuttas), Dardakot (the habitation of Dards), Malikpor (the habitation of Maliks), Vangom (the village of Wanis), Magreypor (the village of Magrays, the name of a tribe), Warpor (the locality of Wars, the name of a tribe), Mlecchmar (the habitation of mlecchas – non-Brahmanas, Wattal Kadal (the bridge named after the locality of scavengers), Naidyar (the place of barbers), Loanpor, Mirpor, Ganiepor, Pirpor, Shaterpor, Barpor, Shangarpor, Chopanpor etc.

Similarly by the lack of communication and hard ships of travel Kashmiris localized many sacred places and tirthas of India and attached same appellation and sanctity to them for example, Gangabal, a sacred lake on Harmukta, created by the Kashmiri Brahmans as substitute for Ganga. Gupithgangai (hidden Ganga), Gangia, a substitute of Ganga created by the Brahmans in village Gangoo etc. which became reason for sanctifying those places. The survival of these place names in their pristine purity even centuries after the conversion of people of Kashmir to Islam is very significant. It is corroborated by the evidences found in the area of study where springs are named thus *Kani Nag*, *Chanwun Nag*, *Mongi Nag*, *Wuwit Nag*, *Bad Nag*, *Har Nag*, *Watal Nag* etc.

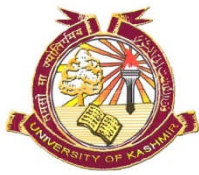
The area under study has a myriad of archaeological remnants too that make it historically rich, promising to inquiry and fruitful to evaluation. In tehsil Pulwama there are number of historical monuments, shrines and caves located in different villages. These monuments, shrines and caves have shaped cultural and ethical identity of the villagers. Some of the well known archaeological monuments of tehsil Pulwama are temple of Narendrasvami built by

Narendraditya 483-490 A. D. at village Payar, Shankara Asthapan of about sixth century A. D. at village Wahibugh, Gurduwara Chatti Padshahi at village Shadimarg, Brarimaej Mandir at village Murran, Mangleshure Asthapan at village Manghom, Batuknath temple at village Tahab, Mangleshwar Bhairav at village Serun, Gagarnath Bhairav at village Inder etc. These temples are mostly dedicated to Shiva and the idols present in the temples are mostly *Shivlingams* which reflect that *Shaivism* was the most dominant creed prevalent from ancient times in this area. Usually many of temples have been built on the springs dedicated to Hindu gods and goddesses which testify to the accommodative nature of Brahmanism in which Naga, Greek and Buddhist cultures have been incorporated successively and successfully. These temples have varied architectural features such as: the temple faces east or west, the temples have straight-edged pyramidal roofs in two tiers instead of the curvilinear superstructure of the southern temples, the triangular pediment enclosing trefoil niches, is on all the four sides of the main shrine, the Grecian pediment is very low, and its roof exceedingly flat, the Kashmirian pediment, on the contrary, is extremely lofty, and its roof is high. The former is adapted for a sunny and almost rainless climate, while the latter is equally well suited to a rainy and snowy climate; the cellular layout with the row of pillars is also of a peculiar style. These temples have shaped the religious history of people and most of them are under the active worship while as some are not owing to the exodus of Kashmiri *Pandits* from the area.

Besides these temples, tehsil Pulwama has certain historically important caves like cave at village Ramu, twin caves at village Koil and cave at village Rajpora etc. Regarding these caves the residents of these villages provide interesting stories and legends. These caves are mostly attributed to some Muslim saints for example, according to the folk belief, Hazrat Rumi *Rishi*^{RA} used to practice austere penances in the cave of Ramu. Rumi *Rishi*^{RA} performed penances in the cave and is also enshrined in the cave, Baba *Rishi*^{RA} carried out austere penances in the two caves of village Koil for about twelve years. The cave of village Rajpora is known by the name of '*Bab Guf*', it is said that Baba Naseeb-u-din Ghazi^{RA} meditated in the cave for the attainment of spiritual

attainment. However, all most all of these caves are now in stage of ruin. The popular belief associated these caves with Muslim *Rishis* which testify to the all pervasive nature of the *Rishi* movement of Kashmir, which has folk remnants still discernible on the historic memory of the people.

The study thus attempts to bring forth the history, popular culture and oral tradition which are corroborated by the well established discipline of archaeology. For understanding the history of Kashmir at micro-level, the study is a humble attempt and may hopefully prove an addition to the undocumented past of the region.



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- Mohammad Yousuf Dar, age 58 years, resident of Ashmandar Pulwama, on 13-03-2011.
- Makan Lal, age 70 years, resident of Tahab Pulwama, on 15-03-2011.
- Mohammad Akbar Dar, age 60 years, resident of Kangan Puwama, on 16-03-2011.
- Abdul Razak Dar, age 130 years resident of Kangan Pulwama, on 16-03-2011.
- Ghulam Mohammad Mir, age 68 years, resident of Payer Pulwama, on 10-04-2011.
- Abdul Rahim Khan, age 100 years, resident of Payer Pulwama, on 10-04-2011.
- Abdul Gani Bhat, age 71 years, resident of Babahar Pulwama, on 20-04-2011.

- Ghulam Mohammad Sofi, age 67 years, resident of Wahibugh Pulwama, on 23-04-2011.
- Imtiyaz Ahmad Mir, age 33 years, resident of Inder Pulwama, on 04-05-2011.
- Mohammad Sidiq Reshi, age 54 years, resident of Chaterpora Pulwama, on 10-05-2011.
- Ali Mohammad Reshi, age 51 years, resident of Chaterpora Pulwama, on 10-05-2011.
- Mushtaq Ahmad Dar, age above 54 years, resident of Pulwama, on 15-05-2011.
- Mohammad Shafi Bhat, age 59 years, resident of Bonara Pulwama, on 20-05-2011.
- Mohammad Yousuf Dar, age 51 years, resident of Dadora Pulwama, on 21-05-2011.
- Surinder Singh, age 53 years, resident of Shadimarg Pulwama, on 02-06-2011.
- K.L. Koul, age 63 years, resident of Murran Pulwama, on 08-06-2011.
- Haji Syed Mohammad Asan, age 73 years, resident of Rajpora Pulwama, on 22-06-2011.
- Mohmmad Amin, age 81 years, resident of Rajpora Pulwama, on 07-07-2011.
- Abdul Rashid Dar, age 65 years, resident of Tengpona Pulwama, on 10-07-2011.
- Sham Lal, age 84years, resident of Pinglena Pulwama, on 22-07-2011.
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- Haji Ghulam Ahmad Dar, age 106 years, resident of Pahoo Pulwama, on 28-07-2011.
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APPENDIX-A

Recording made during an interview with Abdul Rahim Khan, resident of village Payer, Pulwama, on 10-4-2011. He is a farmer. He is about one hundred four years old.

Q. Could you please tell us something about village Payer and why is called Payer?

A. Payer is a small village of district and tehsil Pulwama, situated on the banks of a stream at the foot of the west side and towards the southern extremity of the elevated table land commonly known as *Nonagar wudar*. The village lies about three miles east of Pulwama headquarters.

The old name of the village was Payech and we have no knowledge about the historical background of the place name of the village.

Q. What do you know about the temple present in your village?

A. We have a temple in our village dedicated to god Shiva. The temple is about fifteen hundred years old. There is no use of cementing factor in the temple. The temple is made up of only ten stones. The land under the temple is about seven *Marlas*. Payer temple in earlier times was known by the name of *Nangiraz*.

Q. Do you know who is builder of the temple?

A. We have no knowledge about the builder of the temple.

Q. The roof of the temple has been partly displaced. Have you any knowledge about it that why it is so?

A. The roof of the temple has been partly displaced, which is said to be the result of an attempt made by Pathans to make it down and to destroy it.

APPENDIX-B

Recording made during an interview with Makhan Lal, resident of village Tahab, Pulwama, on 03-11-2011. He is a retired engineer of Power Development Department. He is about sixty eight years old.

Q. Since Tahab is a big village, what do you know about the historical background of the place name of your village?

A. We have always known our village by this name but we have not heard anything pertaining to reasons as to why it was named so.

Q. Could you tell us something about the temple present in your village?

A. In our village (Tahab) there is a temple commonly known by the name of *Swami Wataknath* temple. The temple is very old. The temple consists of a cella (*Garba Griha*) and a *Pradikshana* (circumbulatory path) covered with a conical slopping roof. In the cella is a high Shivlinghecja. Batuknath temple is presently situated on the left side of a stream which is known by the name of *Nala Lar*, but before 1957 the temple was present on the right side of the *Nala*. A small Dharmashala was also attached to the temple. In 1957 the stream was heavily flooded, due to which the Hindu families of the village got completely isolated from the temple. Later on the Hindu families of the village shifted the temple on the left side of the stream.

Q. Since Shivlinga present inside the temple is of black colour why it is so?

A. Shivlinga present inside in the temple is of black colour because of the daily showering of water on it. And to my knowledge there is no other reason behind its black colour.

Q. How many Hindu families are present in village Tahab?

A. In our village (Tahab) there are only seven Hindu families at present.

Q. May you please summarize the Hindu-Muslim relation in your village?

A. The Hindu-Muslim relation in our village is too cordial. You can recognize the relation by the fact that we have provided some land of the temple to Muslim *Awqaf Board* on which the *Board* built a public school in which children of Muslim families are getting education.

Q. Is puja still being performed here?

A. Although it continues but it has decreased significantly owing to heavy migration of Hindu families.